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MERE HINTS

MORAL AND SOCIAL

Rev. JOHN E. GRAHAM

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BALTIMORE CITY
PRINTING AND BINDING
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FOREWORD

THIS book is a re-print of a series of moral and social essays which have been appearing weekly for the past fifteen months in the editorial columns of *The* (Baltimore) *Sun*, with whose kind permission they are now given to the public in collected form. By way of excuse for re-publishing the articles the writer may be pardoned for saying that, on their first appearance, they were very favorably received by *The Sun's* readers many of whom have been urging their re-publication in book-form. Were the matter of the book something entirely new and untried, the writer would be rather diffident about sending it forth; but the fact that its contents have been already tested and approved, naturally inspires him with confidence. As the articles were written originally for a daily journal, they are, of course, necessarily brief and condensed, and for this reason it was deemed proper to give them the somewhat unpretentious title of just mere "Hints." However, this very brevity or terseness, and the condensing of thought, may prove one of their best features. The aim has been to give "multum in parvo." And certainly whatever other criticisms may be justly made of the articles, the charge of diffuseness is not one of them. I have made no changes in the papers, but thought it best to give them without alteration or elaboration, in the order in which they first appeared.

Briefly, the articles are the principles of the strenuous life applied to social morality. And these principles of the strenuous moral life are at bottom nothing less than the principles of the Great Master Who declared that "the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away." The saving cry of modern society is not "Back to Plato," or "Back to Kant," but "Back to Christ and His Gospel." And it is in the hope of helping, in some small degree, to bring about the realization of this truth that we send forth the booklet.

The writer takes this occasion to express his thanks for the courtesy extended him by *The Sun* management, and his deep obligations to Mr. John J. Nelligan, Vice-President of the Safe Deposit and Trust Company of Baltimore, through whose urging the papers were first written and published.

JOHN E. GRAHAM.

Baltimore.

[*June 30, 1909.*]

"LITTLE FOXES," OR DANGEROUS BEGINNINGS

"CATCH us the little foxes that destroy the vines." Long years ago, in these words, the wise and experienced author of the Book of Canticles gave us the key to the philosophy of ethics. It is a saying not often quoted, or even noticed, but one nevertheless pregnant with meaning; and when we term it the key to the philosophy of life, we are uttering no mere empty phrase, but rather an exact truth. For, like the great river and its source, the big things and events of life almost invariably trace their origin back to things which in themselves seem of trifling or minor importance.

By way of illustration, how few are the men of enduring fame who ever arrived at greatness in a single bound! And so with governments—the most stable are those of slow, but sure, development. As the old adage has it, "Rome was not built in a day." Men and nations of mushroom growth are, as a rule, of short duration. Like the frail, perishable flower, they spring up suddenly, and just as suddenly vanish. So, too, with the pleader. The man who jumps at conclusions will never succeed as a logician, because the value and force of an argument often depend precisely on the "little things" that

escape his notice. The successful reasoner is the one who minds the little things in an argument; who is close and patient; who proceeds cautiously, step by step, marking every link in the chain. The true scientist is the laborious, painstaking investigator, who neglects not even the smallest minutiæ of his subject. And the same is true of the historian, the physician, the strategist, and men in every walk and profession of life. They can never attain to a position of real worth or eminence without the closest attention to details. Some of the greatest revolutions and dynastic upheavals in the world's history have arisen from apparently trifling causes. Of course, it is true that the effect cannot be greater than the cause—there must be a proportion between them—but none the less it is often these "little things" that give the impetus, and without a knowledge of them it is impossible to understand and interpret aright the course of historical events. We know how small a spark is required to start a great fire. It is not the heavy showers that are always of greatest benefit to the soil, but rather the slow and steady rainfall. "Drops will (even) pierce the stubborn flint—not by force, but often falling."

There is a story told of Michael Angelo which is very much to the point. After laboring long and patiently over one of his famous masterpieces, it was at length completed. At least so thought the uninitiated layman. But not so the eminent artist. Still unsatisfied, he kept on working at it day after day, chiseling and

polishing, till one of his friends who had observed him concluded that he was wasting his precious time on trifles, and took the liberty to tell him so. The answer is well worth recording as one of the most brilliant gems of worldly wisdom: "Trifles," he replied, "make perfection; and perfection is no trifle."

And so it is likewise in the moral order. Here, too, it is the trifles that make perfection; it is the seemingly little things that, taken in the mass, make the difference between the good man and the bad man. As the Scriptures tell us: "He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little," and "He that is unjust in that which is of small account will be unjust also in things of greater importance." No one ever attains to virtuous eminence, or sinks to the lowest depths of vice, at a single leap. Both eminent virtue and notorious wickedness are of slow growth. It is the oft-repeated little acts of goodness that finally make the solidly good man, and it is the frequent repetition of little acts of vice that eventually develops the case-hardened criminal. Judas Iscariot did not become the villain he was in a single day. Doubtless he started out like most of us—neither over-good nor over-bad. He began with petty thefts, and repeated them again and again till he had got beyond his depth and formed within himself a deep-rooted attachment to vice. Avarice was his ruling passion, and he indulged it, at first in small matters, afterward in things of greater moment, until by slow, and perhaps almost im-

perceptible degrees he became so lost to every sense of honor and loyalty as to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Money was his god.

We know from our own experience how easy it is to become habituated to wrong-doing. The first false step is taken, perhaps, with great trepidation, and gives rise to bitter remorse. But each succeeding step becomes easier than the previous one. Each succeeding step makes the descent less abhorrent, till at last we find ourselves at the bottom of the hill almost before we are aware of it.

The real struggle in the moral life is not between positive, downright, manifest virtue and vice—not between uncompromising justice and great crime. No, the real battle ground is the borderland between the two. How far may one go without ceasing to be substantially just, or without leaving absolutely the path of rectitude? In short, it is a question of yielding or resisting in the so-called little things, or apparent trifles. The man who has never surrendered in small matters will be too deeply shocked and appalled by a gravely evil proposition to give it even a hearing. And whenever a huge theft in the business world, or municipal life, comes to our notice, we are fairly safe every time in suspecting that it is not the culprit's first or second offense. No doubt he has served his due period of apprenticeship before becoming a proficient in the art of embezzling, and the last big haul is but the culminating point, the climax to a series of similar acts.

Hence the importance of guarding against perilous beginnings, and the grave duty incumbent on parents and educators, to warn those under their care against the slightest dalliance with even the shadow of injustice. If there is no beginning, there can be no continuance. If the start be once made, it is difficult to foresee the end; it may prove to be a case of perpetual motion. As the poet puts it:

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

The only safe course, then, is strict, absolute, uncompromising justice in little as in big things. No trifling whatsoever with the rights or belongings of our fellow-man.

[*July 7, 1909.*]

CONSCIENCE AND CASUISTRY

LAST week we had a word to say about the danger of trifling in matters of justice, and the ease with which vicious habits are formed by a succession of petty acts. Casuists have spent much time and thought in endeavoring to draw the line between grave and light injustice. But casuistry is meant for the very weak; it was never intended for noble souls, and the man who is gifted with a keen sense of justice will not be foolhardy enough to see how near he can get to the brink of the abyss without toppling over.

It is not our intention to rail at casuistry, as the unthinking sometimes do. Having only one side—and that the wrong side—presented to their view, they mistake the abuses and excesses for the thing itself and make it synonymous with hair-splitting and moral looseness. Casuistry is simply the application of general moral principles to particular cases; and, in this true sense, every one of us is, and must necessarily be, something of a casuist. But there is a true, and a false casuistry, and it is to the use of the false casuistry—the application of wrong principles, or the misapplication of correct principles—that many deplorable downfalls are due.

Few men set out with the deliberate, cold-blooded intention of becoming dishonest. On the contrary, they try to convince themselves that their conduct is justifiable, and by frequent resort to excuses and palliatives, the conscience becomes gradually seared in these matters. The employee who has contracted with his employer for a stipulated wage, will argue that the compensation is insufficient for his work; that he was compelled by sheer necessity to accept terms which are unjust, and is consequently justified in taking his due surreptitiously. The clerk who becomes interested in the stock market, or starts betting on the race track, tries to persuade himself that he is doing no injustice in borrowing his employer's money. It is purely and simply a loan which he fully intends to repay as soon as luck comes his way. If the luck fails to come his way, he feels himself under the pain-

ful necessity of abstracting more to recoup his losses, still sanguine in the hope of better times to come. And so he goes on, sinking deeper and deeper into the mire, till one fine day he awakens to the fact that things have come to a desperate pass, and that restitution is impossible.

The good people who resort to questionable, and even positively illegal, methods of money-getting for worthy objects of charity, bring themselves to believe that, under the circumstances, things are permissible which in ordinary, every-day life they would be among the first to recognize and condemn as manifestly unlawful. In other words, they act on the odious principle that "the end justifies the means." Perhaps if they were openly charged with acting on this principle, they would indignantly resent the accusation. But it is perfectly true, nevertheless. On no other score or plea can they attempt to justify their methods. The fact that the money made by unlawful means is destined to be spent in a good cause does not alter matters one whit. The end, or purpose, can never make a thing good which is bad in itself.

In addition, the better and the more reputable the persons who encourage these questionable practices, the greater is the harm resulting. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, in one of his letters, warned his hearers not to let vice be even named among them. And his reason was that the very mention of vice—or conversations anent it—tended to familiarize people too much with

the thing itself, by frequently bringing it under their notice. For the same reason there should be no simulation or connivance when there is question of practices that have an evil tendency. The child who is permitted—perhaps encouraged—to take part in games of chance on a small scale, is not at all unlikely to develop a taste for gambling, which will lead him to play the game in real earnest, and on a larger scale, when occasion offers.

Conscience is our guide in the moral life, but to follow it safely, we must first take every means in our power to set it right; we must form it on sound and solid principles. Concession and compromise are sometimes highly commendable in matters of expediency, but when principle or justice is in the balance, nothing short of inexorable law will answer.

[*July 14, 1909.*]

EXTRA-LEGAL COMPENSATION

EXTRA-LEGAL, or as moralists generally term it, occult, compensation, consists in acting on one's own initiative, instead of by the court's authority; assuming to do justice to self independently of a judicial sentence. It is one of the many instances of private self-justice, and may occur between husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, employer and employee, or between the citizen and the State. It

has been a burning question in all ages, in both civil and natural law, and continues to be an ever-present, interesting and vital issue for lawyers and moralists. Though few have claimed that extra-legal compensation is wrong absolutely, and in every case, yet the general tendency has ever been to look upon it as a dangerous remedy, or a last resort, and consequently to hedge it about with so many conditions and restrictions, that its use is comparatively seldom permitted.

While, then, we must admit that extra-legal compensation is justified at times, it will be manifest from what we have to say, that it is the exception, and not the rule. It is so liable to abuse that the greatest caution and safeguards are needed to make it at all permissible. For public order, and the common weal, demand that, ordinarily and regularly, in matters of litigation the law should be enforced, and justice executed, by the public authority instituted for that purpose, and it is a rare case that will permit of an exception.

Besides, social order requires that in all our relations we should exercise good faith, sincerity and fidelity one toward another. Without these qualities there can be no such thing as confidence among men, and society cannot possibly hang together. Whatever, therefore, tends to destroy or weaken these sentiments, is clearly detrimental to the common good and must be vigorously opposed. And such would undoubtedly be the case if extra-legal compensation were regularly sanctioned and practiced. It is easy

to understand then why the law—both natural and civil—has always looked askance at the practice.

The last, but by no means the least important, consideration is that we are utterly untrustworthy when acting as judges in our own cause. If all who resorted to this method of getting their rights, were themselves absolutely, or infallibly, just, fair and impartial—if there were no danger of over-stepping the bounds—the difficulty would not be so great. But full well we know that where self-interest is at stake a thoroughly disinterested judgment is next to impossible. Consciously or unconsciously, the natural and almost inevitable tendency is to favor self; to perceive in all their strength and fullness the arguments that will bolster up our own cause, and to overlook or underrate whatever goes to strengthen the opponent's position. So that the result is likely to be something more than justice to ourselves, and something less than justice to the other party. Hence the old axiom: *"Nemo judex in sua causa."* (No one is a proper judge in his own cause.")

The upshot of the argument is that no one (unless in very exceptional instances) should undertake to exercise justice towards himself where there are well-ordered courts and laws to safeguard individual rights. And even though the individual should fail now and then to secure his own by legal methods, it is, after all, a lesser evil than that society at large should suffer permanently, as would most certainly happen if the

practice of resorting to extra-legal compensation were universally prevalent.

[*July 21, 1909.*]

JUSTICE FAR-REACHING

THERE are, perhaps, few virtues that need to be more strongly emphasized, or more frequently insisted upon, than the virtue of justice; and it is an unquestionable truth that if there were more justice in the world, there would be far less need for charity. For justice demands that we respect the rights of others and give to every man his due; and most assuredly, if this great principle characterized all our dealings with our fellow-men, if respect for the rights and property of the neighbor were universal, there would be comparatively little occasion to call on others for assistance.

From its very nature we can readily see how comprehensive the virtue of justice is. It enters into all our human relations—in the political and business world, in the family and in social life, and the ways of offending against it are various and manifold. Calumny and backbiting are contrary to justice, because they infringe on the injured man's right to his good name or reputation. Murder and assault are opposed to justice, because they violate the victim's right to bodily life and health. But the phase of the question that

most directly and immediately concerns us now, is a due regard for the property rights of our fellow-man.

There are, of course, very many cases in which the distinction between justice and injustice is clear-cut or well defined—where the boundary line between honesty and dishonesty is so well marked as to leave no possible room for doubt or question. But there are also numberless instances in which the injustice is not so manifest—at least, for those whose conscience is not over-delicate in these matters, and who are constantly on the lookout for loopholes of escape from the obligations of justice. And it is precisely for such cases and such persons, that moralists lay down the rule that he who takes or uses the property of another, againt the owner's reasonable will, is guilty of injustice. It matters not what name the culprit may give to his act, or what his motives may have been, it is none the less a crime, and the doer deserves to be branded with the mark of injustice.

The man who deliberately fails to live up to the terms of his contract by supplying an inferior class of goods; the merchant who misrepresents the value of his wares, or sells them for more than their worth; the grocer who uses false weights and measures; the servant who disposes of the master's goods without leave, even in charity; the conscious plagiarist, and all who appropriate to themselves for purposes of gain the products of another's brainwork, whether in art, literature or the industrial world—all of these

are (there is no need to mince words in the matter) simply thieving, and because of their greater knowledge, merit far more punishment than the poor tramp or outcast who takes barely enough to keep body and soul together. The hired man who wastes or fritters away the time that belongs to his employer is just as guilty as if he stole the value of his time in cash. Equally guilty is the man who, having the use of another's goods, deliberately abuses them; the tenant or leaseholder who, through culpable neglect, allows a property to go to wreck and ruin, and the borrower who abuses the confidence reposed in him.

However, anent the relations of employer and employee, it is but just to add that there are two sides, or two parties, to a contract. It is a poor rule that won't work both ways; and if the laboring man has duties, he has his rights also. If the man who sells his time is bound to give it to his employer, the latter in turn is bound to give him a just recompense—a living wage—and should he take a mean advantage of a poor man's necessity, in accordance with sweatshop methods, he is worse than the common thief. Defrauding laborers of their just dues is mentioned in Holy Writ as one of the sins that cry to Heaven for vengeance: "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your field, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." (James, v, 4.)

Some of the things mentioned in this paper are not treated as thefts in civil law; at least, they

are not punished by fine or imprisonment. But they are none the less thefts in the sight of the Almighty, and the genuinely just man will be guided in these matters, not by fear of legal punishment, but rather by the dictates of the moral law.

[*July 28, 1909.*]

BINDING FORCE OF TAXATION LAWS

THE number of those whose conscience is awry in matters of civil law generally, and taxation laws in particular, is by no means small. Should any of our readers doubt the truth of this statement, let them question the men whose duty it is to administer such laws, and in all likelihood they will be satisfied that we are not exaggerating. Many of those to whom we refer are persons of admitted probity and honesty in their private dealings—people who would not for worlds do a deliberate act of injustice to their fellow-men; who are scrupulously exact in the payment of their recognized just debts, and even delicate in their regard for the property rights of others. And yet they never for an instant suspect themselves of wrong-doing in evading just taxation laws on every possible occasion. Such persons evidently look upon civil law not as binding in conscience, but as purely penal enactments. There is no other plausible means of justifying their attempts to escape their pro-rata assessments.

It is easy enough to show that this opinion is very far from the truth. Of course, no one denies that there are such things as purely penal laws; that is to say, laws whose violation entails no real moral evil, but only the obligation of paying the fine imposed in these cases. But assuredly all laws—or better, most laws—are not of this description. The public authority has the right to make just laws binding in conscience, and in most cases it means to use that right. For the Christian there can be no doubt or question at all about this, since the Founder of Christianity has expressly commanded His followers to "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." And for the benefit of those who have not the Scriptures at hand, it may not be amiss to quote the words of the great Doctor of the Gentiles on this subject. Nothing could be more explicit than his utterance, which is an excellent specimen, not only of divine, but of human wisdom as well: "Wherefore be subject of necessity," he urges, "not only for wrath [or through fear], but for conscience' sake. For therefore also you pay tribute. For they are the ministers of God, serving unto this purpose. Render, therefore, to all men their dues. Tribute to whom tribute is due; custom [or tax] to whom custom;" etc.

Common-sense itself urges the same duty. It stands to reason that the members of the body social should be willing to pay for the benefits which they receive from it, and that in proportion to their means. All moralists are agreed that legitimate taxation laws bind, not merely

out of respect or obedience, but in strict justice. In fact, a compliance with these laws is simply the payment of a just debt for value received. The heads of the community incur the public debt for the benefit of the people, and as their representatives, and if some shirk their duty in the matter of reimbursement, others must necessarily be overburdened to make up for the deficit.

It is, of course, inevitable that doubts should sometimes arise as to the justice or legitimacy of a tax, and if there be a thoroughly reasonable, or well-founded, doubt concerning the competency or right of the authorities to impose them, they cannot be said to bind in justice. But when the doubt concerns the necessity, the utility, or the expediency of the tax, or the just ratio or proportion of individual assessments, the presumption is in favor of the authorities; to them should be given the benefit of the doubt. For, standing aloft, as they are, on the watch-tower and seeing needs which escape our notice, they are in a better position to judge of these things than the average citizen who is not directly concerned with the administration of public affairs. It is easy enough to pick flaws, and find matter for criticism, in the acts of our public guardians and lawmakers, but if we would be just in our estimate of them, we must put ourselves in their place, and look at things from their standpoint. In short, fairness and squareness demand that in dealing with the men to whom we have intrusted the care of the commonwealth, we give due weight to both sides of the question, and adopt

toward them a mental and practical attitude that will prove a help, rather than a hindrance, to their efforts.

In this matter of taxation one thing at least is certain—and it is the principal point we wish to make—to wit: that those who avail themselves of the advantages which the State and municipal governments afford, ought in fair play and justice to make a reasonable return, and a refusal to contribute one's just quota, thereby throwing an extra burden on the rest of the community, is equivalent to indirect robbery.

[*August 4, 1909.*]

BIG AND LITTLE MALEFACTORS

THERE is not the slightest doubt that public opinion—what the Germans call the *zeitgeist* or time spirit—has very much to do with the frequency or rarity of crime. It forms a sort of moral atmosphere which all must breathe. Its germs of good or evil are taken in or rejected according to our moral make-up. But, try as we may, it is difficult to free ourselves wholly from its influence. Hence the necessity of doing everything in our power to contribute to the formation of a right public conscience.

By public opinion we mean not only the spoken or printed word, but our general attitude, or manner of acting, as well; and this practical expression of opinion is stronger and more influential than speech. To illustrate: We have but

to notice the too common methods of dealing with criminals. Needless to say, all the criminals are not in the lockup; and we may very truthfully add, that the biggest and worst are still at large, and that this is due, in great measure, to the practical attitude of our public officials, and of the public generally, in dealing with these men.

Only a few weeks ago (July 12) a news item appeared in *The Sun* stating that a man—a certain Whitaker—had been sentenced in the Criminal Court of Suffolk, Va., to two years' imprisonment for stealing an orange, notwithstanding the man's plea that he was forced by hunger to take the fruit, having eaten nothing for two days. Not so very long since there was a similar case of a long-term sentence imposed for the theft of a ham (we don't remember the exact length of the sentence, not having the clipping at hand). When asked if he had anything to say in his defense, the prisoner replied: "Nothing, except to thank God that I didn't take the whole pig." As our readers are fully aware, these are pretty fair samples of the manner of meting out justice to the low-down criminal who has neither money nor friends. As a rule, the petty thief gets justice with a vengeance.

On the contrary, it is a notorious fact that the colossal rogues—those who steal on a large scale—frequently go unpunished, or with a nominal punishment utterly out of proportion to their crime. In fact, the bigger the theft, the more likely they are to get immunity. There are, it

is true, notable and most praiseworthy exceptions; but it is almost the rule to show greater leniency toward the big sharks—the men who steal from the Government, or from the community at large, by the thousands or the millions. We all know how difficult it is to secure the conviction of men of wealth, influence or political prominence.

Nor is it only in the tribunals of justice that we find these conditions. The same state exists practically in society. In words, we are loud enough in our condemnation of the big malefactors. But is it not an unquestionable fact that many of these men, in spite of the clearest proofs against them, are received by society without shame, with open arms—aye, and even lionized by it? People who would scorn to associate with the common or petty thief—with the man who stole a loaf of bread—are proud to be numbered among the friends or acquaintances of the clever landgrabber, the railroad or corporation robber.

In stating these facts, which are patent to every observant reader, there is no intention whatsoever of condoning or minimizing crime, however small its proportions. Far from it. Crime is crime everywhere and at all times. And that is precisely the point we wish to make—that all crime should be punished, and that justice should be meted out in proportion to the crime—the greater the wrong done, the greater the penalty. There is no socialism or class discrimination in this. There is nothing new in it

either. It is merely a statement of an eternal truth. And when we hold that the colossal robbers—no matter how high their social standing—deserve greater contempt and severer punishment than the common thief, we are but applying to present conditions a principle as old as the hills themselves.

[*August 11, 1909.*]

SOME IMPORTANT FACTORS IN THE FORMATION OF PUBLIC OPINION

LAST Wednesday in an editorial entitled "Big and Little Malefactors," it was said that public opinion is sometimes largely responsible for the prevalence of crime. Special reference was made to the fact that, in spite of our much vaunted claim of equal justice to all, there is frequently a discrimination between the influential and the friendless criminal, to the very great disadvantage of the latter. Perhaps if we inquired into the source of this greater indulgence toward the big culprits, we should find it in their greater cleverness and daring. These are qualities that can scarcely fail to arouse our admiration, even in the moral pervert who abuses them. And as long as we permit this feeling to influence our attitude toward them, just so long will they continue to take a mean advantage of it, and fill their coffers at the public expense, trusting to get off with a light sentence, or even without any punishment at all.

However, it is not only in matters of justice, that public opinion plays so prominent a part, but in all other moral matters likewise. And since such is the case, it may not be useless to recall a few of the chief factors that go to make up public opinion, or the public conscience. First and foremost among these factors is the press, which, on account of its extensive or far-reaching influence, is to-day one of the greatest of the forces that make for good or evil, for weal or woe. Everybody reads the papers, and every one is more or less influenced by what he reads. This is true, to a certain extent, even of the strong, and still more true of the weak and undiscriminating. It has been truly said that: "evil associations corrupt good morals," and "Show me a man's heroes, or ideals, and I'll tell you what he is." The average man's favorite newspaper is to him a boon companion. It is his general informant, his "guide, philosopher and friend." When, therefore, a portion of the press, represented by the sensational, scandal-mongering yellow journals, either openly preaches, or covertly insinuates, vice or anything akin to it, the effects may be easily foreseen. It requires very little discernment, then, to realize the vital importance of allowing in the household none but morally clean and healthy newspapers, and tabooing absolutely those that cater to the tastes of the morbid and depraved.

While on the subject of the press, it may not be amiss to mention that what we have said of newspapers, applies with equal force to literature

generally, and more especially to novels. Verily, it is lamentable to find in the hands of youths, and, worse still, of maidens—the mothers and moral trainers of the coming generation—stuff so obscene that, if put in letter form, and sent through the United States mails, it would make the sender liable to fine or imprisonment! When we find the parents of the future nourishing their minds with such unmitigated filth, what can we expect from the children who are so unfortunate as to spring from them?

In line with the yellow journal and filthy, degrading novel is the low, immoral theatre, or what amounts to the same—and is even worse—the self-styled high-class theatre trading in low, immoral shows. It is truly a pitiable condition of affairs when our modern histrionic performers are permitted to enact on the theatrical stage, and before a cultured audience, scenes whose reproduction in our public parks would entitle the actors and actresses to a ride in the patrol wagon.

Such are a few of the forces that go to make up public opinion. Properly directed they can accomplish a vast amount of good; misdirected, they are sources of untold evil. It may be objected that they are effects, rather than causes; that they are governed by the law of supply and demand; in a word, that these things must be furnished because the public demands them. But economists will tell you that the supply often creates the demand. Hence it is our bounden duty, both as individuals and as members of

society, to do all that lies in our power to destroy these evil influences, or at least to restrain them within the very narrowest possible limits.

[*August 18, 1909.*]

HERO-WORSHIP

HERO-WORSHIP is inborn in man. It began with the beginning of the human race, and will end only with its finish. As Carlyle once put it: "It is the joy of man's heart to admire where he can; nothing so lifts him from all his mean imprisonments, were it only for moments, as true admiration." Nor is it only the great and good who admire what is really admirable. Even the vicious respect in others the fine qualities which they themselves lack. In fact, hypocrisy itself is but the tribute which vice pays to virtue. Deprived of the genuine article, the hypocrite takes unto himself the counterfeit; assuming or aping the noble traits which command the respect of thinking men.

Since the world has ever had, and ever will have, its heroes or ideals, clearly it is of prime importance that it have none but the very best placed before it. Truly worthy heroes and ideals are among the world's most prolific sources of great deeds. It goes without saying that the example of generals like Napoleon and our own Washington served, as well as any other one cause, to spur on their men to feats of valor when

the army's courage was on the point of failing. And, not to enter into too many details, the same holds true in every other walk or department of life. It is the pace set by the leaders, the exemplars—in a word, by the heroes—that urges on their admirers to attempt the performance of worthy, if not of positively great, deeds. They may not be able—in most cases, they will not be able—to attain to the ideal; to rival the achievements of their idols. But at all events, it is well to aim high. Like the prudent marksman, we must make a little allowance for the law of gravity, and the consequent drop in distance. If the hero-worshiper cannot equal the brilliant acts of his hero, at least he can follow him at a respectful distance; and even so much is a great gain both for himself personally and for society at large.

Hero-worship, then, is a good thing for the world. There is no doubt about it. But in order that it may accomplish all that it is calculated to effect, none but the right sort of heroes should be proposed for admiration and imitation. No wooden gods should be placed in our shrines; no idols with feet of clay should be placed on our pedestals. None but those of golden deeds should be enthroned for the admiring gaze of the onlookers.

This does not mean, however, that our heroes should be only those whose public acts were great and glittering in the sight of the world. It is all well and good to keep before the eyes of the people the lives and achievements of a Washing-

ton, a Lincoln, and others of their stamp. Men like these were real heroes and deserve all the honor they get. But, after all, there are far greater heroes whose names form no part of history; who were never known—many of them —outside their own little circle. And it would be a truly good thing for the youth of the rising generation if their parents and teachers were to impress this fact deeply on their minds. The best heroes are the people who are doing a real service to humanity, whether their sphere of action be wide or limited. Some of the great warriors whom history extols most highly were anything but benefactors of the race. Their dominant motive through life was human glory or self-aggrandizement; and it is scarcely just and proper to hold them up as models for the young. The unselfish nurse who devotes her days and nights, on the battle field or in the hospital, to the relief of suffering humanity; the poor overworked mother who sacrifices her pleasure and her health for the sake of her offspring, the laborer who toils and moils for the support of his family, in sickness as in health, and in spite of the difficulties that beset his uphill path —all these and many more are doing things perhaps more truly heroic than the deeds of some whom the world acclaims as its greatest heroes.

And these are the characters that should be held up for the admiration and imitation of the rank and file of our children. In spite of the fond wishes of doting parents and guardians, every American child cannot become the Presi-

dent of the United States, every American child cannot become a Lee or a Stonewall Jackson; but every American child can become, with proper training and proper ideals, a conscientious performer of duty in whatever station of life his lot has been cast.

[*September 1, 1909.*]

THE SPIRIT OF DISCONTENT

IT HAS been said that "discontent is the origin of progress," and in one sense the saying is perfectly true. Nations and individuals that are fully satisfied with present conditions are not very likely to bestir themselves and push on to higher things. They are more apt to stagnate. History shows this clearly enough. Take, for instance, the Chinese. Long centuries ago, when our barbarian ancestors were roaming through the forest primeval, the almond-eyed Orientals were among the first and foremost peoples of the civilized world, and had made long strides forward in the arts and sciences. But having once reached a certain stage of development, their pride and self-conceit led them to consider themselves as near perfection as need be, with the result that they have been practically at a standstill ever since—at least, until recently. If we except the Japanese, the same holds true of nearly every other Asiatic people. Again, if Europeans and Americans had been content with

the ancient and mediæval modes of locomotion, we would never have had our steamboats and railroads, our electric railways and, a fortiori, the modern means of aerial navigation.

Discontent, then, understood in this sense, is something highly commendable. It is nothing more or less than the desire to bring out the best that is in us. It is a wish to better conditions, to improve the world, and bring it as near as possible to perfection. There is nothing chimerical or utopian about it; it is self-restrained, reasonable, and kept within due bounds. It aims only at the realizable. It is a source of emulation and praiseworthy rivalry, spurring men on to surpass one another in conferring benefits on mankind at large. It is not only useful, but likewise essential, for the evolution of the race.

There is another sense, however, in which discontent is not the origin of progress, but the very reverse—a sense in which it is not at all laudable, but, on the contrary, one of the worst curses that can light on individuals or nations. We mean here the discontent of sulkiness—the discontent of despair—the state of those who are disgruntled and, at the same time, hopeless; who are ever thinking of, and aspiring to, the unattainable. This is the discontent of pessimism, as the former is the discontent of optimism. To make our meaning clearer and plainer, if need be, it is not at all uncommon to find chronic grumblers who are dissatisfied with the gifts God has given them, and the station of

life for which they are by nature fitted. They want to be what they can never be, and being unable to reach the goal of their desires, decide to sit down idly, with folded arms, and do nothing. They must be either leaders or nobodies—as if an army composed entirely of generals, or a navy, of admirals, would be of any earthly use to a nation.

Such an attitude is the bitter enemy of all human progress, and the foster-parent of stagnation. Those who are so afflicted, evidently lose sight of the fact that society, like the individual, is a living organism, composed of many and varied members, and that its essential well-being depends on the harmonious working or co-operation of its different parts. All can't be the head, or the eye, or the ear. Some must of necessity fill the minor parts; and these minor parts are just as important in their way as the more conspicuous offices. And just as in the human body we value all the members, so in society at large, absolutely speaking, there is no vocation mean or ignoble. Shakespeare tells us that "the world's a stage and all the men and women players thereon." That is true enough. But there is one great, striking difference between the theatrical stage and the great drama of human life. On the former, as a rule, the leading lights—the star actors and actresses—get most of the applause; those who are forced to play the lesser roles often get but scant notice. But on the great, wide stage where the Author of our being is both judge and au-

dience, it matters not what part we play—whether it be prominent or obscure—provided we play it well. The hodcarrier and the poor washerwoman, who perform conscientiously and exactly the duties of their lowly state, may be far more pleasing to their Maker than the professional man, the monarch, or the genius—certainly, a consoling reflection.

Besides, in this world nothing succeeds like success. For most men it means everything; while the Creator regards not the amount of success we obtain, but the efforts we put forth—our earnestness, our sincerity and good will. To do cheerfully and well—to the very best of our ability—the duties of the position in life for which the God of Nature has fitted us, this is the real test, the true and only solid gauge of genuine human worth.

[*September 8, 1909.*]

THE DUTY OF REPARATION

WHEN one has injured another, either intentionally or by culpable negligence, he is bound in conscience to repair the damage, as far as he is able. Regrets and apologies are not sufficient: he must actually make good the loss. Neither will the punishment meted out by public authority answer the purpose. It will indeed atone, in a measure, for the violation of

law, it may serve as a future preventive for the guilty party, and an efficacious lesson or warning for others, and in this way prove a real benefit to the community. But, after all, there is not much satisfaction in this for the injured party. What he wishes, and what he is entitled to, is the recovery of his own.

Whosoever, therefore, has stolen the property of another must, if he would salve his conscience, and square himself with justice, return it, or its equivalent, to the owner. If the owner cannot be found, it must be handed over to his heirs. When it is impossible to locate either, even then the unjust possessor has no right to it and may not hold it. He has not come by it honestly, and must devote it to charitable or philanthropic objects. This feature of the case is clear enough, and generally well understood. As a rule, those who are guilty of downright injustice, if they have a conscience at all, realize that without restitution there is no possibility of pardon.

But there is another phase of the subject which is not so thoroughly understood, and that is the necessity of making restitution in cases of what the moralists style "damnification." It is for this reason that, in beginning the article, we used the words: "Either intentionally or by culpable negligence." Where there has been a deliberate destruction of property, of course there can be no question of the obligation. But the part that is not so clear to some, is the case in which the damage was not inflicted wilfully, but resulted from gross negligence or

carelessness. Yet it is very difficult to see why there should be any doubt about this. Justice—a regard for the rights of others—requires that we exercise a reasonable amount of prudence, care or caution, in order to prevent harm from accruing to our fellow-men through persons for whom, or things for which, we are responsible. If we knowingly neglect this, and thereby indirectly cause a loss to another, it stands to reason that we are bound to make good the loss, which would not have occurred if we had done what justice and common sense demanded.

If I borrow an object of value at all, there is a tacit agreement—an unwritten and unspoken contract—between the lender and myself, that the thing should be returned unimpaired—in the condition in which it was when I took it. Should I ruin it by my deliberate carelessness, certainly I am bound, not only in honor, but likewise in justice, to pay for it. When I rent or lease a property, it is understood that I take reasonably good care of it, and have a proper regard for the owner's interests, or at the very least, that I do nothing positively detrimental to his interests. If by conscious and gross negligence I damaged that property, clearly I ought to repair the damage. Again, every property holder is bound in justice to keep his holdings in such a condition that they will not be a menace to the lives or the health of his fellow-men. And if, through his parsimony or indifference, he allows his property to become the direct cause of accidents or ill health, undoubtedly he is

bound, in strict justice, to repair the damage.

Man, however, possesses other goods besides money or money's worth—goods which cannot be bought with money, and which, if he has a lively sense of honor, he prizes above all material things. Chief among these is his good name—a possession dearer than life itself. As the immortal Bard of Avon puts it: "Who steals my purse steals trash; but he that filches from me my good name, robs me of that which not enriches him, and makes me poor indeed." And if the man who steals my purse is obliged to make restitution, with much more reason is the defamer bound to restore to me my reputation, even if, to accomplish that object, he must go to the length of admitting himself a liar. If those who make a practice of injuring their fellows would consider seriously this duty of reparation, perhaps it would make them much more careful, and so avert a vast deal of human misery. For, after all, the injury done to others, whether in their fortune or good name, is very much in the nature of an illegal loan which must be paid back some day or other with compound interest.

[*September 15, 1909.*]

IS THE CORPORATION AN IRRESPONSIBLE AGENT?

IT IS well-nigh incomprehensible how some men who, as individuals and in private life, are scrupulously honest, seem to consider themselves untrammeled by the common, ordinary

laws of honesty, when acting as members of a syndicate or corporation. In their private capacity they are thoroughly and heartily ashamed to do things which, as monopolists or trust officials, give them not the slightest concern. By what rule of morals they are enabled to arrive at such a pass, we know not. We have not the faintest conception of any principle that would justify their attitude—this Jekyll and Hyde mode of acting. Apart from their corporate connections, they are absolutely reliable and trustworthy. They will pay their just debts, even to the very last farthing. They would scorn to resort to underhand methods for the purpose of circumventing their brother in business. Many of them are eminently respectable, prominent in church and charitable work, and seem to have no reason for conscientious scruples regarding their conduct. But the moment they appear as representatives of the trust or monopoly, they seem to be totally different men. They throw off the Dr. Jekyll side of their character, and become veritable Hydes. The Almighty, no doubt, gave them a heart, and perhaps in private life they show it, but in their business relations they are often utterly heartless, unsympathetic, and even cruel. They will not hesitate to drive their poor competitors to the wall; to deprive others of their means of livelihood; to underpay and tyrannize over their employees, and to grind the last cent out of the widow and the orphan.

What is the reason of this seemingly dual nature? of this striking contrast between the two

sides—the private and the business sides—of one and the same man? Is it because he feels that, in business life, his identity or personality is lost—merged in the corporation or trust? Or can it be that he considers the trust a soulless thing, and consequently without moral responsibility? To the latter supposition we may answer —and it must be confessed that the answer seems ridiculously superfluous—that the trust or corporation is made up of individuals who have a soul, and are supposed to have a conscience; and as the whole is nothing more than the aggregate of the parts that compose it, it follows that the trust or corporation is not a something without soul or responsibility, but on the contrary a thoroughly responsible moral agent.

Therefore, when a body of men band together and enter into a conspiracy to defraud, or overreach, their fellow-men, each and every member of the band is guilty of rank injustice. The actual thief is not always the most guilty party. There are other ways of sinning against our fellow-man's property rights besides the actual commission of theft, and some of these ways make the accessory more guilty than the principal—or, to be more exact, make the seeming accessory the real principal. The man who forces those under his control or influence to perpetrate a wrong, is clearly worse than the actual wrongdoer, who is only his tool or instrument. In fact, every species of conscious and deliberate cooperation in evil involves a moral guilt varying in degree, according to the closeness and efficacy

of the co-operation. As instances, we may mention the giving of advice or counsel by which one is induced to commit a crime which he would not have perpetrated if left to himself; the criminal consent, whether expressed or implied, of those whose influence over others counts for much; the reception of stolen goods; the concealment of grave crime when its actual or threatened exposure would have the effect of deterring the evil-doer, and gross neglect of duty on the part of those who are bound by their office to prevent injustice and safeguard the community.

Besides these general modes of indirect thievery, there are some others peculiar to the industrial or business world. A well-known example is that of monopolizing or "cornering" an article for the purpose of fixing prices to suit the holder—a most reprehensible practice, thoroughly unlawful and unjust, because it is contrary to the natural, economic law of supply and demand. The same holds true of all combinations in restraint of trade; the system of rebates, and the various other ways and means adopted to kill competition—for the benefit of the trusts, and to the great detriment of the consumer.

It will not do to hide behind the pretext that these things are the acts of no single individual, but of a body. Each and every individual who has an active voice or vote in the proceedings is responsible for the wrong to which he consents, and is bound both in honor and conscience to make amends for the injury he has inflicted.

[*September 22, 1909.*]

THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS

SOME things there are that cost nothing in money and yet are among the world's greatest assets. In truth, they are not purchasable with money, and are above all money value; nevertheless, they may be possessed and dispensed as lavishly by the poorest of the poor as by the richest Crœsus on earth. Chief among these is human kindness or sympathy. It is something that mankind can ill dispense with. The strong need it as well as the weak. Those who are able to begin or finish great enterprises without its aid are few and far between. And the rare few who can get along without it are monstrosities. They are not such people as we would care to associate with. If they don't desire our sympathy, it is not very likely that they will have overmuch regard for ourselves. In truth, without this craving for sympathy the world would be loveless, and consequently unfit for habitation.

A very large proportion of the troubles, vexations, and disappointments of married life comes precisely from the lack of sympathy with each other's work, aims and aspirations. Did we not deem it unfair to the dead, we could mention instances in point from the lives of personages celebrated in history—particularly among characters of a literary bent. And the same applies with equal force to the average man and woman.

Among the grounds for divorce, we frequently hear mentioned "incompatibility of temper," and this same "incompatibility of temper" is, in not a few cases, neither more nor less than the lack of sympathy between man and wife.

There are persons to whom this sentiment is quite natural; with others it must be cultivated. But it is well worth cultivating—for the sake of the good it is able to accomplish. How many a poor devil has gone to the bottom of the steep incline, and plunged into the burning abyss, for the want of a kind, sympathetic word spoken in the nick of time! And, on the other hand, how many a one has been saved from wreck and ruin by a helping hand extended just at the crucial moment!

There are plenty of people in the world—and people of spirit, too—who have gone to the bad because of improper methods of dealing with them, perhaps, in youth. There are plenty who can be led but not driven. And a little kindness or sympathy will often accomplish what a vast amount of barking is unable to effect. The great Apostle St. Paul thoroughly understood and acted upon this plan, for he tells us that "he made himself all things to all men that he might gain all to Christ." He was weak with the weak, and strong with the strong. He rejoiced with the glad and wept with the sorrowful. And this is the safe and sane policy that should be adopted by all who would reclaim the erring.

Of course, like all other good things, sympathy is liable to abuse. Weak and utterly de-

pendent people have an abnormal craving for it, and the more they get, the more they want, and the more they get, the weaker and more dependent they become. For moral development, just as for physical growth, exercise is needed. In other words, strength of character cannot be acquired without opposition or resistance. Hence it is the invariable policy of all judicious charity workers to enable the needy to help themselves, instead of supporting them continuously, and thereby running a risk of converting them into parasites. Give them a chance; set them on their feet, but let them do the walking themselves. On the habitually shiftless and improvident, sympathy is wasted. Another grave danger for the sympathy seeker is the craving for popularity, which is not infrequently destructive of truthful and honest manhood. It is extremely difficult for the popularity hunter to be true to himself and his convictions. The desire of pleasing, and the fear of offending, are certainly not conducive to honesty and straightforwardness in expressing one's opinion. Quite the contrary. The man who has an abnormal thirst for popular applause is apt to say what will best please his hearers, regardless of its truth or falsehood. Not, of course, that all who seek sympathy are in this class of popularity hunters. The case is rather an extreme one.

However, the fact that a thing is liable to abuse, should not deter us from using it. But while we cannot get on in life without sympathy, we should make it our earnest endeavor to do with the smallest possible amount of it, giving it

unstintingly to others, however, when occasion demands. This is one of the instances in which it is more blessed to give than to receive. The giving or withholding of a kind, sympathetic word may not cost us much, perhaps not even an effort, but it may mean a lifetime of happiness or a lifetime of misery for the party in need.

[*September 29, 1909.*]

THE USES OF PAIN

RELATIVE to the large number of suicides reported by the daily press, it is fairly safe to say that, in almost every case, self-destruction is due to temporary insanity—to a craze resulting from intolerable grief or shame. It is difficult to imagine anyone in his sane and sober senses deliberately making away with himself. And assuredly there is no bravery in the act. It is not a mark of fortitude, but rather of extreme weakness; of the unwillingness or inability to suffer. As an old poet once put it: "He is not brave that dares to die, but he that boldly bears calamity." Or, as another has it: "When all the blandishments of life are gone, the coward sneaks to death; the brave live on." Many there are whose life is a heavy burden, and to whom death would be a most welcome relief; but they refuse to take this means of getting rid of their troubles, because they realize that the Author of life has placed them here, like sentinels at their posts, and

wishes them to remain until He sees fit to call them. Which is the more heroic or manly course —to shuffle off this mortal coil in order to escape life's cares and sorrows, or to march on, day after day, through the Valley of Shadows, cheerfully or at least resignedly, in the face and teeth of adversity?

A little intelligent reflection on the uses of pain might prove an incalculable help to such as are driven to the verge of desperation, and nigh unto the madness that ends in self-destruction. True enough, the existence of physical and moral evil has been a grave and vexing problem since men first began to think. The believer finds in it numerous and weighty difficulties which he can never hope to solve, while the atheist adduces it as an argument against the belief in a just or merciful God. However, even though we cannot penetrate into the depths of the mystery of pain, there is enough on the surface to show us that it has its advantages. In the first place, it makes us more humane and sympathetic. Who are the persons best fitted to sympathize with the afflicted? Certainly not those who have never known the pangs of suffering, but rather they who have themselves passed through the fiery crucible and know full well what it means. They alone can truly say, with the ancient Pagan poet: "I myself am human, hence nothing that concerns humanity is a matter of indifference to me."

Again, suffering lessens the bitterness of the final parting. If life, with all its pains and griefs, is yet so sweet, how much more difficult would

it be to leave it, if there were nothing at all to suffer! Besides, suffering is an indispensable factor in character building. It is to man's moral development what food and exercise are to his physical growth; and no man or woman who has not experienced pain, can really be said to have arrived at maturity. They can best enjoy, who know best how to suffer. In fact, our capacity for enjoyment is in proportion to our capacity for suffering. Were there never a rift in the lute, or a cloud in the sky, the pleasures of life would lose half their charm. They would become monotonous and pall on us, for: "The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken." We never appreciate better the boon of health than after a severe spell of illness. How much brighter the sunshine seems, after a long period of storm and cloudy weather! Who feels so keenly the charms of home as the returning exile?

Fortunate are they who take this sensible view of affliction, who make a virtue of necessity, and are able to draw good even out of seeming evil; who, instead of losing hope, bring themselves to realize that the longest night must have an end, and that the darkest hour comes just before the dawn.

[*October 6, 1909.*]

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

IN HIS recent report ascribing criminality among children mainly to parental neglect,

the Juvenile Court judge strikes at the very root of the evil. No doubt, environment counts for a vast deal in the moulding of youth. Other things being equal, the child reared amid favorable surroundings has a great advantage over the child of the slums. Unquestionably, many are held in high regard today who might be occupying prison cells had their lines been cast in a morally unhealthy atmosphere. And, on the other hand, many who are now wearing the striped suit of the convict would have become a credit to themselves and their forbears, if their associations had been different. However, after all has been said, environment is not everything; and the evil influence of the very worst surroundings can be counteracted by proper training. There is not one of us, perhaps, who could not verify this by pointing to living proofs. Rare flowers have been known to bloom and flourish even on a muck heap.

As Pope wisely informs us: "'Tis education forms the common mind, and as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." Unfortunately, too many parents think they have done their duty by their children when they have hustled them off to school to get a smattering of secular knowledge. This is instruction, if you will, but not education. Education means something more than mere information. It means the bringing out of all the good there is in the child; the development of all his faculties or powers—not of the mind alone, but of the heart and soul as well. The whole work cannot possibly be done in the classroom.

Much still remains for the parents. And the chief factor in parental guidance is the influence of good example. Judicious correction is wholesome and necessary, but unless the example go along with it, it will count for little or nothing. As the Latins have it: "*Verba movent, exempla trahunt*" (Words move; example compels").

Our Scripture readers will remember that Christ "began to do and to teach." The example went before the precept. The child is an imitative animal, and he is far more apt to follow our practice than our counsel. It is the height of folly in parents to expect to cure children of vicious practices to which they themselves are palpably addicted. The child will reason that what is good enough for the parents is good enough for itself.

In the matter of correction, it is safe to say that reproofs given in the heat of passion are generally wasted. A word uttered in calmer moments, and with full deliberation, will have far more weight. Over-severity is almost as baneful in its effects as over-indulgence. Constant nagging only serves to harden and embitter the child of spirit, and make him long for the day when he will be able to shake off the galling yoke. And when that day comes, he is likely to shake it off with a vengeance —in proportion to the strain he has been under. The parent who seeks to avoid the imputation of neglect by going to the opposite extreme is simply "steering clear of Charybdis to founder upon Scylla." Vastly wiser and more beneficial is the policy of those who treat their children like human

beings, who manage to win their love and confidence by entering into their childish lives—their joys and sorrows, their pleasures and hopes.

Needless to say, all children are not cast in the same mold, and it is a huge mistake to treat them as though they were. If "the proper study of mankind is man," it is doubly incumbent on parents to study the bent and temperament of their offspring to know how to deal with them. They owe this both to God and country. It is essential for the upbringing of their children as good citizens of the Commonwealth, and loyal subjects of the King of kings.

[*October 13, 1909.*]

A PLEA FOR THE ERRING

THOSE whom duty brings into contact with the erring, know how difficult it is for fallen men and women—especially the latter—to redeem or rehabilitate themselves. The Jean Valjean of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" stands not alone in this respect. He is a true type of a large class who find even long years of repentance and atonement powerless to blot out the memory of the past, or undo the disastrous consequences of one false step. We know whereof we speak. We have met such time and time again. The attitude of the pseudo-saints toward the poor unfortunates who have lapsed from grace, forcibly reminds us of Christ's narrative anent the man who "went

down from Jerusalem to Jerico and fell among robbers." While he lay by the roadside, half dead, the highly respected priest and the Levite passed him by without bestowing any more attention on him than if he were the carcass of a dumb brute. It was the obscure and despised Samaritan—an utter stranger—who came to his aid and acted the part of a friend. This parable of the gentle and compassionate Jesus—this sad commentary on man's inhumanity to man—was spoken for all time, and is just as applicable today as it was twenty centuries ago. Now, as then, instead of lending a helping hand to those who have wandered from the strait and narrow path, too many professing Christians pass them by with a shrug of the shoulders and a glance of contempt, like the proud Pharisee, inwardly thanking God that they are not as these poor publicans; while in all probability, the objects of their disgust, like the Gospel publican, are far better in the sight of God, Who is the only competent judge, Who alone knows the strength of their temptations, and the efforts they made to conquer, and Who reads perhaps in the hearts of the fallen more genuine character and loyalty than can be found in the carping critics, with all their sanctimoniousness and sense of superiority, and pious rolling and upward turning of eyes in holy horror and indignation.

So cocksure are these modern Pharisees, so self-satisfied, so snugly encased in their little shell of conventional religion and respectability, that they seem utterly unaware of their own fail-

ings, and the possibility of their falling, one day, from their supposed high eminence, down even unto the lowest depths. It would be well for them to bring home to themselves the warning words of Holy Writ: "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." When such people do fall, small wonder that we can scarcely find it in our heart to pity them, for they richly deserve their fate. George Eliot once said "I've never any pity for conceited people, for I think they carry their comfort about with them." It is a sentiment which many of us can heartily endorse.

How any one can be utterly void of compassion for the repentant wrongdoer, and still claim to be a true Christian, is altogether beyond us. Such a one may indeed conform to the externals of Christianity, but certainly the vital sap is gone out of his religion. It is burned up, dried up, dead; for he is lacking in its most essential quality—love of the brotherhood. The most striking feature of Christ's life was His human sympathy, or compassion, for sinners. It is this characteristic that sets Him out in bold relief against the religious leaders of His time. When Magdalen, Zaccheus, Levi the taxgatherer, and the woman taken in adultery, were brought before His bar of judgment, He did not cast them off with scorn and reproaches as the ancient and modern Pharisees would have done, but received them with open arms, and cordially welcomed them back to His Father's house. Such, too, was His treatment of the prodigal son, the strayed sheep, etc. In fact, He seemed to take a peculiar

delight in styling Himself the Good Shepherd. His relations with sinners prove fully the truth of the old adage: "To err is human; to forgive, divine."

And such is the character of all who are truly and really Christ's. The more like to Him they are, the more compassionate and forgiving are they likewise. Experience shows that those who are freest from vice are at the same time the most merciful and considerate in their dealings with the unfortunate. To push back to earth, and trample in the dust, the poor fallen wretch who is trying to get on his feet, is something so odious that no fitting terms can be found to characterize it. And those who do it are surely none of Christ's, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.

[*October 20, 1909.*]

LITERARY INFLUENCES

A CLOSE student of human nature once said: "Give me the making of a nation's ballads, and I care not who make its laws." He might have said the same with equal truth, not only of a nation's ballads, but of its literature generally. Among the influences that affect our lives most powerfully—that tend to make or mar character—few are more active or dominant than reading. And if this is true of the average man or woman, it applies much more forcibly to those who are naturally susceptible or impressionable.

To many persons, especially those endowed with a vivid imagination, the heroes and heroines of fiction seem almost as real and tangible as if they were living realities. They are the patterns after which the admiring reader endeavors to shape his views and conduct. Hence the transcendent importance, particularly for these latter, of choosing none but the best, and eschewing, above all, the silly novels that trade in mawkish sentimentalism.

One's favorite, habitual reading matter is a pretty safe gauge of his mental and moral caliber, and we cannot be very far astray in judging one's character by his literary ideals. Persons of noble minds and high aims have no relish for trash. Some, of course—such as book reviewers and those who are called upon to direct others—are obliged by their office or duty to wade through a lot of this filthy stuff; and in their case, it is to be presumed that they have sufficient sense and judgment to keep them from contamination. Their position is like that of the physician or surgeon who must of necessity come in contact with things corrupt and revolting, and who endures them, not because he likes them, but in order to do away with them eventually, and promote purity and cleanliness.

For the rest, if they value their moral welfare, it is not only advisable, but absolutely necessary, to beware of the literary sewage of free love and unbridled licentiousness. The sacred Scriptures inform us that "he who loves danger shall perish in it." Those who put their hands in the fire

must expect to be burned. He who indulges in immoral reading may escape for a time, but sooner or later he is sure to be caught in the meshes. Someone has said: "Throw enough mud, and some of it is bound to stick." And certainly those who wallow and revel in the mire must inevitably be smirched by it. It is foolhardy in the extreme to count on emerging spotless from such moral cesspools as the obscene, degrading novels that have come to us in the past few years from across the water. Prudence demands that we refrain from even naming the wretched productions we have in mind, lest the bare mention of them arouse curiosity and incite to their perusal. The wonder is that their degenerate authors—those apostles of dirt, those corrupters of youth, and would-be destroyers of domestic purity—are not in the penitentiary. They are worse than ordinary murderers, for they kill human souls. 'Tis a pity the law has not made it a gravely criminal offense to write, publish or sell those wantonly suggestive works which tend to undermine and sap the moral life of the reader.

They want to depict life as it is, forsooth—the actual, the real, instead of the ideal. But is it necessary to go into the sewers and gutters and brothels to find real life? The truth is that, far from painting life as it is, they invariably give it to us in its most abnormal and morbid phases.

Bacon tells us that "some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." Had he known or foreseen the products of the modern school of filthy

realism, he might have added: "And some are to be cast into the flames unopened, and the sooner the better."

However, there is another and a brighter side to the literary picture. For, if the literature of the decadents works incalculable evil, so, too, high-class, sound, healthy literature is a source of untold good. Presenting morality not in the abstract merely, but in the concrete, personifying or embodying it in characters who live up to high ideals, it is interesting as well as profitable, and thereby has a decided advantage over the set moral discourse, and frequently accomplishes as much, if not more, good. In the event of a doubt as to the wholesome or unwholesome influence of a book, the poet Southey gives us a fairly safe guide: "Would you know whether the tendency of a book is good or evil? Examine in what state of mind you lay it down." In other words, judge of it by its effect. It is the test given us by the Master long ages since: "The tree is known by its fruits."

[*October 27, 1909.*]

THE STAGE—PAST AND PRESENT

TIME was when the stage proved an invaluable aid to religion and morality; when it was, in fact, an influence more efficacious in some respects than formal preaching—for the good, moral drama is really a sermon in action, often appealing to the imagination more powerfully than words. We are not so much of a

laudator temporis acti as to maintain that this state of things has completely passed away. There are still many excellent, healthy and uplifting dramas on the boards, and all honor both to those who composed, and those who patronize them! But it is certainly a far cry from the tragedies of the ancient Greeks, and the mysteries and miracle plays of mediæval times to some of the well-known productions that disgrace the modern stage. In its origin, the drama was primarily religious in character. Religion and morality were the dominant features, too, in the plays of the Middle Ages. We have a striking instance of this in the still living Passion Play of Oberammergau. But the pagan Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did its best to put an end to all that, and from its position as the ally of religion and good morals—an incentive to right thinking and right living—the drama rapidly degenerated into a force making for evil.

That poetry in general, and the drama in particular, lose nothing by serving as the handmaids of religion, is amply evidenced by the fact that many of the greatest dramatic or poetic productions of all times have been more or less of this character. Witness the creations of an Aeschylus and a Sophocles, the "Divina Commedia" of Dante, Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," Milton's "Paradise Lost," to say nothing of some recent very creditable efforts in the same line. Rarely, if ever, in mediæval or modern times, has the drama been carried to such a high pitch of per-

fection, as in the Spain of Calderon and Lope de Vega, from whom both France and England have borrowed largely. And the Spanish drama of those days was essentially and characteristically religious.

Of course, our reference to the quondam religious and moral character of the drama is not meant to imply that the stage of today should be a catechetical school of religion and morality. No one expects that much. But we all have a perfect right to expect, and demand, that at least it present nothing positively detrimental to the religious and moral sense of its patrons; and our allusion to its one-time position as exponent and defender of religion and morals strongly emphasizes this right.

Writing in one of the Sunday newspapers a few weeks ago, an American theatrical manager, well known on both sides of the Atlantic, gave it as his belief that, taken all in all, the stage was never better than it is at present. That is true enough as regards costuming, scenic effect, etc. It may be true, too, as far as the private lives of the players are concerned. On this point we have hardly sufficient data for making a comparison. But there is one thing well worthy of note in contrasting the past and present of the theatre, and that is the difference in the methods of presenting vice. No doubt, in the days of Charles II and Queen Anne, the stage exhibited more horseplay, more coarseness or vulgarity than we find today. But, after all, such exhibitions are not half so hurtful as the modern style of in-

nuendo. Vice stalking abroad in all its nakedness, becomes loathsome and repellent. It is the clever hint, the veiled allusion, and the half disclosure that work the greatest havoc. The worst feature of some of the best-known modern productions is their suggestiveness; and there is not the slightest injustice in classing such plays among the devil's own tactics. From a moral standpoint, the melodramatic performances of the blood-and-thunder type, given in the second and third rate houses, are vastly preferable to many of the more ambitious, but diabolically insidious, attractions offered by some of the miscalled high-grade theatres. For, crude as they are, often lacking in probability, artistic taste, and other features that appeal to the cultured theatregoer, these sensational gems have at least, as a rule, the merit of painting virtue and vice in their true colors, so as to leave no doubt in the minds of the audience as to what is deemed worthy of admiration, and what deserves their withering contempt.

President Taft and Senator Knox set a fine example, a few months ago, by leaving a Washington theatre during the rendition of a shady performance; and if that example were followed by the respectable element generally—by those to whom the rank and file look for light and guidance—doubtless we would soon be rid of these questionable, and often downright immoral, exhibitions which leave such foul blotches on the modern stage. The managements would be forced to eliminate them, if for no other reason, because they wouldn't pay.

[*November 3, 1909.*]

DEED VS. WORDS

THERE is hardly a more disagreeable companion, or a greater bore, than the habitual boaster. Sensible people put little or no trust in the man who is incessantly laying claim to a title which he cannot prove by deeds. Works count for more than words, and we are naturally inclined to judge a man rather by what he does than by what he says. The old soldier who has won his laurels on many a hotly contested battlefield, amid the whizzing of bullets and the cannon's roar, has no need to proclaim aloud his bravery on every street corner. His deeds speak far more eloquently than words. It isn't necessary for the man who has made great sacrifices for his country's weal to be everlastingly prating about his patriotism. Everybody admits it. His actions are his best credentials. Such is the standard of judgment the world over. No prudent man of business will place implicit confidence in an untried employee, be he ever so highly recommended. A man may be all that he claims—and more. But in spite of that, we are fully justified in declining to accept him at his own rating, until he has proved by his deeds that his own rating is the proper one, and that he has not overrated himself.

The point cannot be better illustrated than by a reference to the methods of Christ on more than one occasion. When His hearers re-

fused to receive His own account of Himself He confidently referred them to His works: "If you will not believe Me, believe My works, for they give testimony of Me." If you are unwilling to judge Me by what I say, then judge Me by what I do. It is the old staple argument of cause and effect, of the tree and its fruits. When John the Baptist sent some of his followers to question Jesus concerning His mission, the latter, instead of setting forth a formidable array of verbal proofs, simply pointed to His achievements: "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak," etc. It was the best reply He could have given. The argument was unanswerable and, for those who had eyes to see, and were not blinded by prejudice, absolutely convincing. Here are the fruits. They are undeniably good. Hence the tree that bore them must itself be sound and healthy, for the evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Here are the effects. The cause must be proportioned to them.

Exaggerated pride of ancestry is another form of boasting, less odious, perhaps, than self-laudation, but sometimes far more pitiable. St. Paul, with his wonted practical philosophy, advises his readers not to "glory beyond measure in other men's labors. * * * But let every man prove his own work, and so he shall have glory in himself only and not in another." And Christ time and again upbraided His contemporaries for priding themselves on the deeds of their

fathers, without making any effort to imitate them. "Bring forth fruits worthy of penance," said John the Baptist, "and think not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father.'" They who live on the deeds or reputation of their ancestors are moral parasites. What merit or credit do they deserve for the achievements of their kith and kin? Surely, the mere accident of birth or blood relationship gives them no right to glory. *"Noblesse oblige."* The fact that one has the blood of heroes or sages flowing in his veins, is an additional reason for expecting great things of himself. And if he fails to measure up to their standard, or to emulate them, then their wise or valorous deeds, instead of reflecting any glory upon him, only redound to his greater shame. Few are more deserving of contempt than the degenerate scion of a noble house who rests supinely on his oars and seeks to crown himself with the borrowed laurels of his sires. And what we say of ancestral pride applies equally to the boasting of one's illustrious compatriots. If the noble deeds of those who have gone before arouse no echo in our hearts; if they do not incite us to aim at the same lofty ideals—to tend toward the same goal—there is assuredly no rhyme or reason in our glorying, but, on the contrary, every reason to hang our heads in shame.

[*November 10, 1909.*]

THE HUMAN OCTOPUS

THE Bible tells us that "covetousness is the root of all evils;" but it tells us also that "every creature of God is good," and money is no exception to the rule. It is not money that the sacred writers condemn, but rather the inordinate love of it. Good in itself, it becomes a source of evil, only when men set their hearts upon it, become slaves to it, and worship it as their god. Few vices are more roundly scored in Holy Writ than that of avarice. The wise man does not hesitate to term it "the service of idols," and assures us that "there is not a more wicked thing than to love money." And no wonder, for we know from experience that once the spirit of insatiable greed takes possession of a man's heart, he will stoop to almost anything to compass his desires. The wellsprings of human kindness are dried up within him, and nothing at all is worth his while, save the quest of the glittering gold.

One of the most loathsome of God's creatures is the ugly, slimy octopus, or devil-fish, and one of the most blood-curdling sights imaginable is to behold it seizing its unsuspecting prey in its tentacles, and clasping the wretched victim in its foul embrace, till death in mercy puts an end to the tortures of the writhing, agonized creature. The image of this horrid thing, and its revolting process of blood-sucking, remind us forcibly of the avaricious money-grinder. Him-

self and the disgusting devil-fish are sufficiently alike in method to be classed in the same family. He has no more heart than the octopus. Everything is food that comes his way. Charity, justice, religion, patriotism—all must yield and bend before his overmastering passion of greed.

At first blush the picture may seem to be a little too highly colored. But it isn't. It is fact, not fancy. We could lay our hand on many such men without going very far out of our way. Their name, unfortunately, is legion. The world is full of them, and we are brushing against them every hour of the day. Not all, of course, have fallen to the lowest depths. There are grades in avarice, as in every other vice. But in one degree or another, they abound among us, in the shape of misers, "cornerers," loan sharks, and the thousands of others who prey and batten upon the helplessness of their fellow-men. It is these human vampires who enrich themselves by taking heavy toll of the sweat and blood of their brethren, whom St. James the Apostle addresses in such scathing terms: "Go to, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped your fields, of which you have defrauded them, crieth out, and their cry hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." And the Almighty, speaking through Moses: "You shall not wrong the widows and the orphan. And if you do wrong them, they will cry unto Me, and I shall hear their cry, and My wrath shall be stirred up against you."

Avarice is not confined to any one class. The immensely rich may be absolutely free from it, and the very poorest saturated with it. It is the spirit of greed, and not the possession of money, that marks the covetous man. And wherever it is found, in rich or poor, it begets the same results, the same hardheartedness and insensibility to the claims of the needy. If "charity covers a multitude of sins," avarice is the fostering parent of a multitude of the meanest vices. It is a trait which deservedly renders its possessor as odious in the judgment of his fellowmen, as he is in the sight of his God.

[*November 17, 1909.*]

SURE TEST OF TRUE GOODNESS

ONE of the axioms of the Middle Age philosophers was: *"Bonum est diffusivum sui,"* which may be freely translated: "Good likes to spread itself." The tendency to communicate itself to others, is inseparable from true goodness. Unselfishness is an unerring mark of genuine virtue, and any brand that bears another label is infallibly counterfeit. There never yet lived a really good selfish man, for goodness and selfishness are as diametrically opposed to each other as the opposite poles of the earth. The combination may sometimes seem to exist, but it is only apparent and superficial. As well try to mix oil and water, as to make a harmonious blend

of goodness and self-seeking. The real lover of truth feels irresistibly impelled to impart his knowledge. The religion of the self-centered, who are so exclusively occupied with their own salvation that they have no time or care for the needs of their fellow-men, is undoubtedly spurious. It has no real existence outside their own shallow minds. When Fortune smiles on those who are truly good at heart, instantly they hasten to share their luck with the less favored. In the circle in which they move, they make their presence felt by the genial warmth and light which issue from them, like the rays of the sun in the heavens, enlivening and brightening the rugged path of their suffering fellow-travelers through the cold and cheerless Vale of Affliction.

While there are many such among us, the world, after all, cannot be such a bad place to abide. Were there many more such, the burdens of life would assuredly be very much lighter than they are. We need not theorize, or stop to prove what we say of the nature of true goodness. We have substantial proofs in abundance roundabout us. Scarcely a day passes without its record of praiseworthy benefactions—of the noble efforts made by men and women, as rich in genuine virtue as they are in worldly goods, to alleviate the miseries of their less fortunate brethren. If all our multimillionaires were like Schwab, and others of his ilk whose names and kindly deeds are known to the public, there would be far less bitterness of feeling between

the plutocratic upper ten and the impoverished, submerged thousands. Time and again we have it dinned into our ears, as one of the chief reasons for the overthrow of the modern industrial system, that it tends inevitably to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. If, under present conditions, the millions must necessarily go to a comparative few, God grant that at least they may continue to flow into the hands of those who will use them—or, at any rate, a considerable part of them—for the benefit of their fellowmen.

For ages man has been looking forward to the millennium—to the golden age of abundance, when poverty will be a thing unknown. But the millennium has not yet come, and the bald truth is, it never will come. It is elusive as the mirage in the desert. The limpid waters in which the weary traveler means to slake his thirst are ever looming up before him; but no matter how far or how rapidly he advances, they are ever-equidistant. It is an optical illusion. There is no water. And there is no millennium. As long as the world shall last, so long will poverty and suffering exist. As Christ tells us: "The poor you have always with you." Men may, and will, continue till the crack of doom, to form to themselves fanciful schemes for the betterment of their kind; but the end will find them as far from perfection as they were at the beginning. The closest possible approach to the millennium will have been reached, when men of wealth and ability universally recognize and per-

form their individual duties to their fellow-man. This is the best, and the only practical, solution of the great, world-wide social problem.

[*November 24, 1909.*]

THANKSGIVING

IT may not be amiss to recall to mind that when our forefathers instituted a day of national thanksgiving, they had no intention whatsoever of setting apart a day for the sole purpose of turkey-eating and general festivity. Their motive was far deeper and far more serious than that. It was the genuinely religious motive of returning thanks to the Giver of all good gifts for the favors bestowed upon us as a people or nation.

To the truly appreciative man, every day will be, in a sense, a day of thanksgiving for individual benefits received. He will not confine himself to stated periods; least of all, to one paltry day in the year. But Thanksgiving Day is expressly consecrated to the giving of thanks by the whole people in unison, for the national advantages which they enjoy, for the success of our arms, the establishment and preservation of our free republic, for the immense material wealth lavished upon our country, etc. It is not rare to find nations losing sight of the original intent and purpose of their national holidays,

and converting into base or common uses what was intended primarily for their moral uplift. God grant that this may never be true of our national day of thanksgiving, for certainly no other nation under Heaven has more reason to be thankful than the people of this liberty-loving and liberty-giving land.

An old cynic has defined gratitude as "a lively sense of future benefits," and if we consider it not as it really is or should be, but as it is only too commonly practiced among us, we shall find a great deal of truth in his definition. The Master once delivered a sermon on the subject of ingratitude—an illustrated sermon. The occasion was the cure of the ten lepers. He said little, but the little He did say struck, and still strikes, home. Ten men besought Christ to heal them. The ten were healed. Only one of the ten returned to give thanks. And the Great Healer, looking upon him, queried sadly: "And where are the nine others?" Have they so soon forgotten? Yes, they got what they wanted and that was the end of it. They went their way rejoicing, recking little of Him to Whom they owed their rejoicing. We all know that this is not a solitary or very exceptional instance. It is common enough. It might be well for us to ask ourselves honestly on this day if it is not a case of "de te fabula narratur."

The favor seekers can be numbered by the billions, but those who return thanks are comparatively few and far between, and even of those who do, perhaps quite a large propor-

tion have solely or principally in view the obtaining of further favors, thereby justifying the cynic's notion of gratitude. Men may be duped or imposed upon by such insincere professions. They may, and often do, mistake the hollow sound for the true ring. But not so the Almighty, Whose all-seeing Eye pries into the hidden depths. He is not to be mocked or hoodwinked, and of those whose gratitude is only make-believe He may well say what He said of some others long ago: "These people honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

In fact, it is hard to get some people to admit that they have anything to be thankful for. In their overweening pride and selfishness, they act as though God were made for man—not man for God. They seem to regard what is done for them as their due or birthright. They are the very people who get far more than they deserve, and infinitely more than they give; the people, indeed, who give nothing that they are not absolutely forced to give. Were their deserts measured by human standards, or weighed in the scales of strict human justice, they would fare worse than they do with Almighty God. They are not half as reasonable with their Maker as they are with their fellow-men. They seldom think of applying the Golden Rule in their dealings with Him.

The odium which attaches to the ingrate is truly well deserved. Gratitude is not only a dictate of reason, but likewise an instinct of the brute creation, and the man who lacks it is,

in that one respect at least, inferior to the brute. It is to be hoped that none of us will deserve that stigma tomorrow, by forgetting the Giver in the midst of His gifts. While entering fully into the festive spirit of the day, it behooves us to keep well in mind its more serious side and to let our hearts go out in genuine gratitude to Him from Whom all blessings flow.

[*December 1, 1909.*]

DIVES AND LAZARUS

THE point touched upon two weeks ago, concerning the relations of rich and poor, is not a mere matter of choice or counsel, but a positive duty. That those who have more than their share of the world's wealth are bound to help the needy, is a dictate of reason, as well as a precept of divine law. God never intended that Dives should revel in luxury while Lazarus is starving at his door. Inequalities of wealth there must, and ever will be, under any and every social or industrial system. It is a condition necessarily resulting from the inevitable and unalterable mental and physical inequalities of the human race; and every scheme that has for its object the reduction of all mankind to the same property level is purely Utopian, and must of necessity fail. All have not the same allotment of brains or brawn, and if all were made equal in point of wealth today, the brains and brawn

would be on top again tomorrow. But, while the distribution of wealth will ever remain unequal, and while no man is obliged to yield up what is required for the suitable maintenance of his proper station in life, common sense itself will suggest that no one man, or no body of men, has the right to hoard up extravagantly superfluous treasures to the detriment of the people at large. As there is but a limited supply of the means of subsistence, it stands to reason that if some have too much, others will suffer want. Hence the necessity for an equitable division, if not to even-up things, at least to prevent destitution.

There is no social or economic heresy in this. It is the plain, unvarnished social and economic teaching of both the Old and the New Testament. Both are replete with proofs that man is not the absolute or arbitrary master of the superfluous goods in his possession; but rather the steward, or custodian, holding them in trust for the benefit of his fellow-men. The early Christians were certainly not extreme Socialists, in the modern sense of the term, and yet we know that they went so far as to possess all things in common. St. James the Apostle makes religion itself synonymous with practical charity: "Religion pure and undefiled with God and the Father is this: to visit [help] the orphans and widows in their distress." St. John identifies love of God with beneficence to His creatures: "He who has the substance of this world and sees his brother in need, and closes the bowels of

mercy, or charity, against him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" And, strongest of all, Christ Himself, while insisting on the importance of belief, yet makes beneficence the standard by which He shall judge the world. Not every one that saith "Lord, Lord," shall enter into His kingdom, but: "I was ahungered, and ye gave Me to eat; thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink; naked, and ye clothed Me," etc.

It is sometimes claimed that the money expended on extravagantly lavish entertainments is not misspent, since it finds its way into the natural channels of commerce, and thereby ultimately benefits the community at large. There is some truth in this. Far better thus than to have it lie idle in the coffers of the rich. But how vastly much more good could be accomplished by devoting these superfluous funds to the endowment of hospitals, asylums, educational institutions, etc. Besides, not infrequently it is precisely the sight, or accounts, of these worse than pagan saturnalia, that drive the hungry thousands to the brink of madness, that add fuel to the fire of the would-be levelers, and precipitate disastrous social revolutions for the purpose of equalizing conditions. The men and women of wealth have the remedy, or preventive, in their own hands. It is in their power to bind the poor to them with hooks stronger than those of steel, or to estrange them beyond repair. History repeats itself; and the not very distant future may show that on their choice depends their making or unmaking.

[*December 8, 1909.*]

USURY

THOSE who are conversant with the history of usury know that in past ages it was looked upon with anything but favor. In fact, many of the most reputable moralists regarded it as nothing short of criminal, and they understood by the term "usury" not merely an exorbitant rate of interest, but any and all interest whatsoever. In the Old Testament the Hebrews were forbidden to demand any compensation for loans made to their brethren: "Thou shalt not lend to thy brother money to usury; nor corn, nor any other thing. To thy brother thou shalt lend that which he wanteth, without usury." And in the new dispensation, St. Luke tells his readers to "do good and lend, hoping nothing thereby." The old Hebrew word for usury is equivalent to the English word "bite." Money let out at interest is likened to the bite of the asp. For, as the man stricken by the asp is lulled into a peaceful slumber from which he never awakes, so he who takes money at interest, at first is sensible only of the benefit received; but, like the asp's venom, the poison of usury gradually percolates through his system, to his ultimate destruction. One of the early Christian writers speaks of it as "homicide," and the ancient Chaldeans termed the practice "perdition."

From this it is evident that the clear-cut and universally recognized lawfulness of even mod-

erate usury is not quite as old as the hills. Our forbears were not at all so sure of it. The morality of the question has afforded ample and strenuous exercise for the brains of some of the world's best thinkers. Roman history is full of the subject. And so is ancient philosophy. It is a debatable land for whose possession men of widely different professions have contended—theologians, ethical writers, jurisconsults, political economists, and civil rulers. The old moralists were generally as hostile to it, as the modern political economists are favorable. In an editorial it is, of course, impossible to give details of the controversy, to weigh the pros and cons, or explain the reasons for such a diversity of opinions.

Our purpose in mentioning these differences of view is simply to show that the practice is fraught with difficulties and dangers, and consequently should be confined within strict limits. Whatever may have been the case in the past, whether the opponents of usury were right or wrong, it is certain enough that in the present conditions of industrial life, a moderate rate of interest on loans is perfectly legitimate. Those who would deny this nowadays—if there are any such—are few and far between. At any rate, welcome or unwelcome, it has come to stay, and we must make the best of it. The great trouble with some of the old moralists was their theory of the "sterility" of money. To them it was but a dead instrument, and the whole profit was due to the labor and skill of the user. Senseless

as the reason may appear to us, it was not so to their contemporaries, for the industrial life of those days differed widely from ours. The modern system of investments was non-existent.

But there is not the slightest doubt that in our present way of doing things, money itself makes money; capital is an absolutely necessary means of production. And he who would assert that money is by nature sterile would be looked upon as a madman. It must be conceded, then, that those who lend their capital are entitled to a fair share of the profits, or to a moderate rate of interest. But here precisely is the crux. What constitutes a fair or moderate rate of interest? Opinions, as we know, vary, and different States have different rates. There is no infallible means of arriving at a solution, and in the absence of a better, the only thing practicable is to abide by the legal rate.

[*December 15, 1909.*]

HYPNOTISM AND CRIME

NOT long ago *The Sun* recorded the case of a New Jersey hypnotist who succeeded in putting his subject to sleep, but was unable to revive him. As a result, the hypnotized man is dead, and the hypnotizer in jail, charged with homicide. Later on came news from Vassar of another case which, for a time, threatened to have a somewhat similar ending. These and

many other like incidents which have occurred from time to time ought to convince us that hypnotism is not a matter for trifling or amusement, or even for experiment. It should be a salutary warning to amateurs, and irresponsible persons generally, to keep hands off. Mental suggestion has already begun to play a considerable part in our criminal procedure, and it is destined to assume a still more important role in the future, if the practice be allowed to go unchecked. Hypnotism, at its best, is dangerous. Like strychnine or arsenic, it may prove a valuable therapeutic, or a deadly poison, according to the amount and frequency of the dose, and the circumstances in which it is given. Though employed principally in the treatment of nervous disorders, experienced physicians assure us that its frequent repetition eventually shatters the nervous system. And this is just what we should expect, since the sleep which it induces is not natural, but artificial and morbid, rather a mental disease than a healthy or normal rest.

But the liability to physical injury, though serious enough, is by no means the darkest and worst side of hypnosis. In the hands of conscientious and pure-minded physicians, who use it with as much caution as they do other powerful remedies of the kind, it is a potent influence for good. But, unfortunately, the practice is not restricted to the virtuous. The vicious likewise possess and use the power; and facts go to show that, in their hands, it may become a sure and speedy means of carrying out the most dastardly schemes, at

the same time enabling the criminal to shield himself from the punishment which his crimes deserve. When we remember that the subject is completely under the control of the hypnotist, it is easy enough to realize what a wide field of opportunities it opens up to the libertine.

The greater number of eminent hypnotists, while recognizing the value of this agent as a suggestive therapeutic, or imagination-cure, point out clearly the great moral evils likely to result from its abuse. The French specialists—Drs. Binet and Fere—quote with approval an extract from a secret report presented to the King of France by Bailly, Jussieu and our own Franklin, in 1784. "Women," they observe, "are always magnetized by men. The established relations are doubtless those of a patient to the physician. But this physician is a man, and whatever the illness may be, it does not deprive us of our sex; it does not entirely withdraw us from the power of the other sex * * * The magnetic treatment must of necessity be dangerous to morality. While proposing to cure diseases that require prolonged treatment, pleasing emotions are excited, emotions to which we look back with regret, and seek to revive, * * * but morally they must be condemned; and they are all the more dangerous, as it becomes easier for them to be rendered habitual." There is much more to the same effect, some of it a great deal stronger and more graphic than the parts quoted. And bear in mind that these men were not at all professional moralists. The expert Dr. Charcot,

the greatest authority on hypnotism, characterizes the practice as a two-edged sword.

The upshot of the thing is that the practice of hypnotism should be regulated by law, just like the sale of cocaine or any other drug. Such is the case already in most of the European states. Russia, Prussia and Denmark have restricted the practice to the medical faculties; while Italy, Austria and Switzerland have taken steps to check its public, indiscriminate employment. No one should be permitted to exercise the hypnotic power without a special license from the proper authorities; and the license should be given only to those who will use it for the benefit of their fellow-men.

[*December 21, 1909.*]

ETHICS OF SUICIDE

THE large and seemingly increasing number of suicides reported from day to day may well give rise to a little serious reflection on the ethics of self-destruction. The more frequently such deplorable incidents occur, the more we become familiarized with them, and the less heinous they are likely to appear, especially when the element of pity enters in. The sober truth of the matter is that suicide is a most serious crime, both against God and human society. For one who has any real faith in God and His Providence, who believes that the Almighty

placed us here for a definite purpose, insanity is the only passable excuse for the act. No man, however heavy his burdens, has a moral right to throw away the life that God gave him. The Lord God alone is the absolute Master of life and death; He has put us here in the capacity of sentinels, and he who abandons his post is a traitor to his God. This is the first and best consideration for the believer in a future life—that in usurping Divine power, he is guilty of grave disloyalty to his Maker. 'Tis "the dread of something after death, the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns," that "makes us rather bear those ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of."

But even apart from religious faith, there are strong—overwhelmingly strong—reasons from other sources to deter the man of honor from such a course. The natural law and common sense cry out against it as gravely injurious to society at large, and particularly to that portion of it in which our lot is cast. If no loftier motive will appeal to the man contemplating suicide, his regard and consideration for others should prove a sufficient deterrent. Self-destruction is the offspring of selfishness; and perhaps this is the meanest thing about it. No man liveth or dieth to himself alone. There are others concerned. And if the would-be suicide cares naught for his own life, at least he might have some thought for those who are, or should be, near and dear to him; he might think of the disgrace his act will bring upon them, the heart-

rending grief it will cause, of the destitution that may follow in its wake for those who are dependent on him for their means of support. No life need be wholly useless, and if one has reason to look upon his own life as of little or no use, his remedy is to better, not to destroy, it.

Against the suicide whose mind is deranged, of course there is nothing to be said—except this, perhaps, that in a large percentage of even these cases, the mental derangement itself might have been prevented by taking a sensible view of life and its misfortunes. Suicidal mania results either from the supposed unbearableness of imaginary ills, or, oftener, from magnifying and brooding over real and serious afflictions. Such an attitude of mind is an evident sign of weakness, not necessarily reprehensible in its beginnings, inasmuch as it may arise from one's physical condition—but curable if the patient will consent to use the remedy, and the remedy is clearly a change of viewpoint; to cease playing the baby, and look at things from the standpoint of the full-grown adult; to submit gracefully to the inevitable and endeavor to make the best of it. Habit is overcome by habit, and it is the plain duty of those who have a recognized tendency to suicidal brooding and melancholy, to do all that lies in their power to acquire opposite habits; otherwise they make themselves morally responsible for the awful result—for he who puts the cause deliberately, is answerable for the effect.

It is well for us to remember at times, when our burden of grief seems too heavy to bear, that the very heaviest and worst will be lifted some day at least. There is no valid reason for despondency. Time is a great healer, as our previous experiences must have taught us. No earthly grief is eternal in duration. As a wise and cheerful old poet has it:

> Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring,
> Not endless night, yet not eternal day;
> The saddest birds a season find to sing,
> The roughest storm a calm may soon allay.
> Thus with succeeding turns, God tempereth all,
> That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

There is no poetry or romance about deliberate suicide. It is downright criminal. The suicide is not a brave man, but an arrant coward. It requires far greater heroism to "bear the whips and scorns of time, * * * to grunt and sweat under a weary life," than to end it all by one fell stroke, painful indeed, but of speedy effect. And we have no hesitancy whatsoever in answering Hamlet's famous question thus:—Decidedly

> Tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, than
> to take arms against a sea of troubles
> And end them

by such means as the cowardly act of self-destruction.

[*December 22, 1909.*]

BRIGHT SIDE OF THE WORLD

IN social, as in individual, life it is not good for us to be ever looking at the darkest and worst side of things. Such an attitude of mind only tends to breed a generation of chronic grumblers. The genuine lover of truth wants to see things as they are, and things are neither as they are painted by the optimist nor by the pessimist. The truth lies in the golden mean between the two extremes. The reader will doubtless recall the Quixotic legend of the valiant knights of yore who wrangled and fought over the color of the shield. One swore it was white, and the other as stoutly maintained it was black. Both were part right and part wrong, as the shield was white on one side and black on the other, and each saw only the side confronting his own visual organ.

So is it with our views of life. Some see only the bright side, others only the dark, and as a result, neither is competent to judge. The habit of railing and ranting at existing customs and institutions as unqualifiedly bad, seems to make some people very big and virtuous in their own eyes. We are not referring to that just and tempered criticism which is prompted by public spirit, or a genuine zeal for the common good, but rather to the unmeasured abuse seemingly indulged in for its own sake, and by those

who have nothing to offer by way of substitute. In short, it is destructive, not constructive, criticism that merits our reprobation.

And even anent real reformers, we know that they are not likely to minimize the evils which they condemn. Perhaps we do them no injustice in saying that, as a rule, the tendency is to let their zeal outrun their discretion; and the more earnest they are, the more likely is this tendency to manifest itself. The perfectly poised philosopher, who unvaryingly keeps his heart in due subjection to his head, is rather a rare exception.

That there are in our modern life many and serious evils, endangering the welfare both of the individual and of society, is a truth which no one with half an eye can question. Every student of history knows that widespread luxury —and its natural offspring, effeminacy—unrestricted divorce, the dissemination of infidel and immoral literature, and official corruption, have ever proved most potent factors in the destruction of governments and nations. And these ugly spectres are certainly stalking about in our midst today. But, in spite of that, it would be far from the truth to say that our age is the worst ever. Owing to improved facilities for communication, and the rapid transmission of news, we know more about contemporary life than did our ancestors, and the vicious part is apt to strike us more forcibly than its virtuous side, for vice is ever more blatant and obtrusive than virtue. Nevertheless, we have good reason to believe

that our era could well stand a comparison with the ages that are past. Notwithstanding the lamentations of the latter-day Jeremiahs, religion and morality are neither dead nor dying. Far from passing into the sere and yellow leaf, they are still green, and growing vigorously. The opinion of the masses—the vox populi—is still to be found on the side of truth and righteousness. As a counterpoise to modern evils, we have the ever-vigilant, lynx-eyed and, in the main, uncorrupted public press, which, with comparatively few exceptions, is decidedly moral in tone and character, the sturdy opponent of evil-doers and the stanch defender of justice and right.

We sometimes forget that the very hue and cry raised against the criminal elements, is proof of a thorough awakening of the public conscience, which shows that, after all, the modern world is not so hopelessly wicked. Never before did public opinion play such an important role in the world's history.

These are a few of the points—on the bright side of modern life—which we would do well to ponder over now and then, lest, while looking too exclusively at the dark and evil side of the picture, we become confirmed pessimists, and fail to appreciate and develop the real good that is strewn everywhere about us.

[*December 29, 1909.*]

TAKING STOCK

IN ancient Rome stood a statue representing the god Janus (from whom our month of January takes its name), with two heads, looking in opposite directions. The time is fast approaching—if not already here—when the old pagan deity will have many imitators in this twofold point of view. Looking backward—glancing forward—is the proper motto and occupation of the present. Standing on the threshold of the new year—on the boundary line between the new and the old—it is quite the natural thing for us to pass in review the momentous happenings of the dying year, and take thought for the one that will soon be ushered in. Following the example of the prudent business man, it is advisable at this season to take an inventory of our moral goods, to look up the debit and credit sides of our books, to ascertain what are our moral assets and liabilities, and, as far as lies in our power, to square our accounts with God and conscience.

For each and every one of us, the recording angel has added another leaf to the Book of Life—a leaf containing the passing year's record of good and evil, of opportunities utilized and opportunities squandered, of time employed to advantage and time frittered away in trifling, or perhaps in worse. It has often been said that time is money. True enough, but this is a rather

sordid view. Time is infinitely more than money. It is the soul's capital; it is our spiritual stock-in-trade. Looking back at the year which is rapidly drawing to a close, no doubt there are very few of us perfectly satisfied with the use we have made of our time. If called upon to render an account of our stewardship, many would be forced to admit that their losses exceed their profits. But in spite of that, there is no reason for discouragement. If we will but take the means, our very losses may be turned to good account. The philosophic Thackeray once said: "If thou hast never been a fool, thou wilt never be a wise man," and his words are but a paraphrase of the old and true saw, *"Errando discimus"* (We learn by making mistakes). Fortunate are they who know how to profit by the errors of the past, who will take advantage of last year's blunders to steer clear of them, and shape their course aright during the year whose dawn is nigh.

With this thought in mind, fully intending to benefit by dearly bought knowledge, it is customary for the well-meaning to form good resolutions at the beginning of the new year. Anent this laudable custom, it may be in order to make an observation, the truth of which will be confirmed by thousands out of their own experience. It is this: that little or no good is likely to come of a multitude of resolutions. Some people are so constituted that they will readily promise anything and everything when the fit is on them, or on the impulse of the moment, but frequently

the fulfilment falls far short of the promise. They remind us of Christ's parable concerning the man who ordered his two sons to work in the field. The first promised instantly and cheerfully to do the paternal behest, and doubtless intended to keep his promise; but as a matter of fact he failed to keep it. Impulsive, good-natured, but fickle, unsteady and thoughtless, he soon forgot his plighted word. The other, who at first positively refused, but afterward, seized with remorse, put in a good day's work, was decidedly the more trustworthy of the two. When many resolutions are taken they will soon be forgotten, or become impossible of fulfilment, from their very multiplicity.

By far the better plan is to imitate the skilful strategist who brings all his artillery to bear on one or two of the most important points, instead of scattering, and thereby wasting, his energies. One solidly good resolve is enough. A little self-introspection will show that each of us has a radical or root passion—a dominant vicious tendency—from which most or all of our faults spring as naturally as the branches of the tree issue from its trunk. This prevailing passion is the seat of the disease; the other failings are but the symptoms. It is the cause; the others are the effects. And it stands to reason that if we really wish to rid ourselves of the effects, we must first get rid of the cause.

[*January 5, 1910.*]

THE GREAT BROTHERHOOD

WE have ample evidence roundabout us that "the brotherhood of men" is not a mere empty phrase. The older the world grows, the more we become convinced of our interdependence one upon another, and the more earnestly we desire, and seek to effect, a genuine solidarity, in fact, as well as in name. The feeling has its primary cause in the very nature of man; it has been emphasized and strengthened by the teachings of religion, but its present marked development is due, in great measure, to the conditions of modern life. Man is by nature a social animal, and he recognizes instinctively that it is only in conjunction with his kind, that he can hope to bring out the best that is in him. Ethics and, still more, religion tend to raise the fact to a higher plane, stripping it of the purely egotistic or selfish, by proclaiming that we have one common Father, God, and all men are brethren.

While, of course, this last is by far the best and noblest incentive to human helpfulness, still the motive arising from necessity and the nature of things is not to be lightly laid aside. It need not, and should not, be the sole, or even the dominant one, but it is useful as a help.

As an illustration of human interdependence, the reader may remember Aesop's fable of "The Belly and the Members," which was once so successfully employed by a wise old Roman

statesman to bring the disgruntled plebs to their senses. And St. Paul's illustration will appeal even more strongly to the Christian. "There are many members," he says, "but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand 'I need not thy help,' nor again the head to the feet 'I have no need of you.' Yea, much more those that seem to be the more feeble members of the body, are more necessary. * * * And if one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it."

This truth has never been brought home with such force to men as it is in our modern industrial life, with its highly specialized division of labor. A failure in one big branch of industry, or a great strike, like the recent strike of the Switchmen's Union in the Northwest, affects not only one locality, or the one concern directly interested, but many others as well. Its action is like that of the ripples on the breast of the waters, or the vibrating waves of ether, pushing on, regardless, to the farthest possible limit.

The realization of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men is especially evident in the gradual passing away of intense and narrow sectionalism, or clannishness. Patriotism is still, and will ever continue to be, a virtue, but among the thinking element at least, it no longer gives rise to the bitter race antagonisms of the past. International unions for social, educational, and industrial purposes, are becoming more and more common. The old scholastic dialecticians

used to say that an argument is only as strong as its weakest premise, and, applying the same principle to society, men are coming to realize more fully that the body politic is no stronger than its weakest part, and that the social organism cannot truly be called sound and healthy so long as some of its members are diseased. And, while we still have with us plenty of the selfish tribe, who seek to stifle the promptings of charity or philanthropy by asking, like Cain of old, "Am I my brother's keeper?" there is, fortunately, a large and ever-growing number of men and women keenly alive to a sense of their duty toward their brethren.

We may not have much, or any, wealth to spare for the needy, but the giving of alms is not the only way to help the cause of humanity. There is another, and a better way, one which is open to all of us, and one which cannot be measured in terms of money, and that way may be aptly characterized by the one word—service. It may be much, or it may be little, that we can do in this line, but whatever the amount, great or small, if each one does his share, he is contributing, in the best sense, to the attainment of the ideal human brotherhood.

[*January 12, 1910.*]

NATURE'S LAW OF COMPENSATION

IF we remember aright, there is a legend in the old Pagan mythology somewhat to this effect: The mighty Jove, annoyed by the inces-

sant murmurings of dissatisfied mortals, appointed a day whereon all who had any complaints to make should assemble before his throne, discuss their grievances, and obtain redress, as far as such a thing was possible of attainment, even for the great ruler of Olympus. So they all came, bringing their various burdens, great and small, along with them. It was a sort of general market day; and the king of the gods gave them liberty to exchange their burdens as they would. But the legend goes on to say that, after comparing notes, they all returned as they came, carrying away the same identical burdens, each one convinced that, after all, his own was the lightest and easiest for him. The moral is obvious. To-day, as of yore, each man thinks the other's cross lighter than his own, till he attempts to lift it, and then he may change his mind. Many a one regards himself as the greatest of sufferers till he has listened to the outpouring of his neighbor's griefs. We have known some to be permanently cured of their troubles—even to the extent of laughing at themselves—after hearkening to such recitals.

There is assuredly such a thing in life as a law of compensation. What we lack in some respects we usually make up in others, which goes to prove that, after all, nature is not so very partial in the apportionment of her gifts. He who has lost the use of one arm can often do double work with the other. Those who are wanting in brain force, may have more than their due share of brawn, and vice versa. People who

are deprived of the use of one of the senses, frequently have another more than usually well developed. Thus the blind have, as a rule, an exceptionally keen sense of touch and hearing. And by the way, it may be worth mentioning that the blind with whom we have been personally acquainted have been almost invariably bright and cheerful—a fact which has ever been for us, one of life's real mysteries.

The poor sometimes envy the rich; but if the whole truth were known, perhaps they are far better off in their poverty. It is a truism to say that riches do not bring health and contentment; and certainly these are the most desirable of human possessions. In this connection the reader will probably recall the old story of the rich man and the poor who met in a country place, in the freshness of early morn, the rich man hunting for an appetite, the poor man for something to satisfy his. Both had their troubles; but which was the worse off?

Again, as regards the distribution of the big and the little ills of life, we think it was Sir Walter Scott who observed that those who are free from the greater trials, frequently suffer much more from the lesser ones—the petty cares and vexations that beset their daily path. And most of us can vouch for the truth of his remark. There are people who can bear great calamities with fortitude, and yet are completely unnerved and upset by things which are in themselves trifling and harmless.

Touching the things which it is in our power to seek or avoid, we find the self-same law in operation—the same system of compensation running all through life. Nature makes us pay for everything we get. If we will insist on dancing, we must be ready to "pay the piper." Undue merriment is succeeded by a corresponding depression. The reaction is bound to come. Those who have tried the experiment, know to their sorrow that "a merry evening maketh a sad morning."

And so we might go on indefinitely, heaping up instances to prove that, no matter how uneven or unequal things may appear for the time, they are pretty evenly balanced in the long run. And the true philosopher is the one who is content to recognize and accept conditions as they are, and try to make the best of them.

[*January 19, 1910.*]

THE BODY SOCIAL AND ITS MEMBERS

GOD never yet made a useless thing. Not one of His creatures, however insignificant, but has its purpose—even the tiniest insect that crawls, and the reptile, and pain, both mental and physical. We may not be able to see this, on account of our intellectual short-sightedness, but nevertheless we must admit it. God's wisdom demands it. And if this is true of inanimate

things, and the brute creation, it is much more true of man. The halt and the blind and the palsied, and all the others who are sometimes regarded by the materialistic economist as burdens upon the human race, have their several parts to play in the great divine scheme of things. The economist's view of usefulness is not the only one; there is a far better and truer one, and it is the viewpoint of Almighty God himself. All creatures, with the single exception of man, conform by nature to the plan of God. Man alone is free, and he uses his freedom at times to get out of harmony with God's designs; for what is sin but a lack of harmony with the will of God?

The proper evolution of man consists in developing and perfecting the talents he has, and using them to advantage, to accomplish the greatest possible amount of good in whatever position he may happen to find himself. This is precisely what Christ meant when He said: "To him that hath, more shall be given, and he shall abound, but from him that hath not, even that which he hath, shall be taken away." Society has its full share of disgruntled characters, who are a source of misery to themselves and every one round about them. Dissatisfied with their share of God's gifts, and their station in life, instead of making the best of what they have, and doing the work for which they are fitted, they pout and sulk, like Achilles in his tent, and refuse to work at all. Such an attitude is nothing less than a spirit of revolt, unexpressed, indeed, but none the less real, against the Almighty.

These people seem to forget that society, like the human body, is a living organism, with head, brains, heart, arteries and everything else that goes to make up the real man of flesh and blood, and that its welfare depends on the harmonious working of all its various parts. It is not by mere chance or accident that we are fitted for certain kinds of work, but rather by design. Every creature that God has made has its own proper function in the great social organism, its own proper place in the divine economy, and when it gets out of its natural place, it is as useless as the arm or the leg that is severed from the human trunk. When we insist on filling positions for which the God of Nature never intended us, we must of necessity prove incompetents. Clearly all cannot be the head or the brains; some must do the less desirable work. And often this is precisely the ground of complaint. There are not many who care to do the less honorable, or the less remunerative, labor. But, after all, it is better to be a first-rate cobbler than a third-rate lawyer. For those who are influenced by considerations of a higher life, the great St. Paul assures us (I cor., xii) that, before God, no honest labor is menial or ignoble; that the Almighty does not look on these things with the eye of man; that with Him it is not the part we play, but the manner of our playing it, that counts, and that the works which men consider menial, if done in the proper spirit, are really the most honorable in His sight. But even abstracting from the higher motives, and measuring things

by the standard of the here and now, it is decidedly the part of common sense to content ourselves with the work for which we are adapted, instead of wasting our time in pining and sighing for the impossible or impracticable. There is a world of wisdom in the old and oft-repeated warning, "Let the shoemaker stick to his last."

[*January 26, 1910.*]

MORAL MOTOR FORCES

THE true gauge of moral worth is not success, but effort. The very word virtue implies this, for virtue is something pertaining to the vir—the man—or better, to the strong, whether male or female. Now and then we hear one referred to as negatively good. The distinction between negative and positive goodness is, to say the least, misleading. In reality there is no such thing as negative goodness. There may be a marked absence of vicious traits, but this is not virtue; and through a misunderstanding of this truth, both credit and blame are often placed where they are least deserved. Many a one is seemingly good, simply because he hasn't courage or energy enough to be otherwise, or because he lacks the occasion. Until one has been tried and proved, it is unwise to put overmuch confidence in his virtue. On the other hand, some

are wofully underrated, from a moral standpoint, because of our inability to see their trials and struggles.

In moral, as in physical, development growth is the law of life. Some appear to grow with ease and naturalness; their course through life is like a pleasure trip on a calm and placid lake. Others again are continually tempest-tossed on the high seas, and not infrequently on the very verge of shipwreck. Or, like the weary and foot-sore mountain climber, just as they seem to be making headway, the foot slips, and down again they go. It is rather hard, we must admit. Yet, if these climbers are made of the right mettle, they won't permit themselves to be daunted by failure; and besides, strange as the assertion may appear, if they are doing their best, they are really making better progress than those who seem to advance without effort. It is not a mushroom growth; it is the slow, but steady and sure, growth of the little acorn into the tall and sturdy oak. This, of course, is not meant as a concession to the weak-kneed, who are ever on the alert for pretexts to justify their backslidings, but by way of encouragement to those who mean to do right, who try to do right, but occasionally slip and stumble and fall, almost in spite of themselves.

It is common enough to find people who regard strong passions as a matter of grievance, who are thoroughly discouraged by their presence, and envy those who are free from them. The truth is, they are rather additional motives

for gratitude. The human passions are not bad, but good; they are sources, not of weakness, but of strength; they are in fact, to our moral nature what the fuel is to the furnace, or the steam to the engine; they constitute the electric forces of morality. The phlegmatic or dispassionate man may be amiable and inoffensive enough, but, as a rule, he is incapable of great or noble deeds. If he is not likely to do any great evil, neither is he likely to do any great good. It is easier far to lop off surplus energy, than to make the plant grow in an uncongenial soil. The men who have done the great things of life, have been almost invariably men of strong passions; and this is true, not only of the noted characters of profane history, but of the sacred chronicles as well. To mention one instance out of many, the life and writings of the great St. Paul show him to have been naturally one of the most passionate of men. And when these great souls turned to Christ, they did not attempt to stifle their passions, but rather to divert them into different channels; to use for good ends and aims, the energies which they had formerly wasted on things evil or indifferent. Mary of Magdala did not cease to love after she found the Christ. Instead, she gave to Him the heart which, till then, had lavished its affections on creatures unworthy of her.

Whether the passions will prove sources of good or evil, depends entirely on the direction we give them. Like the great elements—fire, air and water—they are capable of becoming man's

best friends, or his most deadly foe. Subjected to law and reason, they are of greatest benefit to the individual and society; allowed to run riot, they will prove the undoing of both. The spirited horse is vastly preferable to the tame and spiritless old nag; but, before he can become really serviceable, he needs to be broken and controlled by one who knows how. And the human passions too, if they are to redound to our credit and welfare, must first be brought to recognize in us their master.

[*February 2, 1910.*]

CONCEIT AND FLIPPANCY BORN OF SHALLOWNESS

"LET knowledge grow from more to more, but more of reverence in us dwell," writes Tennyson. Unquestionably, the farther we advance in real knowledge, the more reverent we shall surely become. Only the sciolist is irreverent. The true scientist may be, like Darwin, Huxley and Spencer, an unbeliever, but he is never flippant. The great primal causes of things may ever remain for him a sealed book, an insoluble problem, sufficient to keep his judgment in suspense, but his science opens up to him a realm too vast and wondrous to admit of cocksureness, contemptuous sneering, or irreverence. Whatever his private views may be, he knows both too much and too little to laugh at opposing

beliefs that have anything like a solid foundation to rest upon. Tennyson himself held to no dogmatic creed, but his poetic insight into the great heart of nature ever maintained his mind in an attitude of reverential awe, and made him recognize how infinitesimally small and insignificant are our best efforts, and thoughts, and schemes, when set side by side with the plans of the mighty Architect of the Universe:

> Our little systems have their day,
> They have their day and cease to be;
> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they!

Francis Bacon has said that a superficial knowledge of science may lead men away from God, but a thorough study of the same is almost certain to bring them back to Him. The eminent Louis Pasteur once said: "When one has studied much, he returns to the faith of the Breton peasant, and if I had studied still more, I should have the faith of the Breton woman." And, long before either of them, Royal David had told us that "only the fool saith in his heart: 'There is no God.'"

A sense of humility and reverence is characteristic of the truly great and deeply learned; and wherever we find a conceited mind, or a flippant, we may be sure that there is shallowness behind it: for conceit and flippancy, cocksureness and irreverence, are the natural offspring of superficiality. Such was the thought in the mind of Alexander Pope when he penned the words:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing. Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

None, perhaps, is so vain of his attainments, as the college boy who has just mastered the rudiments of his Latin or Greek grammar. But, unless he is a born fool, the farther he advances into the vast explored, and yet unexplored, lands of knowledge, the more he realizes his shortcomings, and the conceit is taken out of him. The ever-widening and lengthening vista which opens up before his eyes, makes him see how very little, after all, is his bit of knowledge, compared with the sum total of things known and unknown. It is but an atom in the broad universe. If we ever want an opinion expressed, or a valuation set, on our darling efforts, literary or otherwise, we shall find almost invariably, that we will get not only more truth, but likewise more mercy and considerateness, from the expert, than we could ever hope from the amateur.

These few suggestions are thrown out in the hope that they may prove of practical benefit to us in our quest of truth. When looking for light and guidance in the great problems of life, it is of prime importance that we make choice of none but the safest and sanest counselors, of those who know thoroughly well what they do know, and know, too, their own limitations. The superficial brilliancy, the ribald jests, the irreverent quips, and false, but plausible, reasoning of the cocksure, omniscient iconoclast, may be entertaining enough for the nonce, but his very flippancy and irreverence, his light-fingered and

light-headed methods of handling such grave questions, stamp him as a shallow-brained and unsafe guide. The brand of Cain is on his brow. Prudence demands that we mark and distrust the man who has ever a ready and self-satisfying solution of all the mysteries both over and under the sun. Better far, and safer far, to follow the lead of those who approach the complex problems of life in a spirit of reverential awe, with a reasonable amount of self-diffidence, and who have the courage and good sense to say, when occasion demands: "I do not know."

[*February 9, 1910.*]

MENTAL THOROUGHNESS

IT was not only yesterday that the world began to recognize the value of mental thoroughness. Long ago the saying *"Timeo hominem unius libri"* ("I fear the man of one book") had taken its place among the near-axioms of the Latin tongue. True, the saying admits of more than one meaning, and it is sometimes claimed that its author feared the man of one book because he is likely to be also one-sided and narrow. But this is rather the exception than the rule; it is due to a kink in the brain rather than to the methods employed. For, while the specialist makes his chosen branch of knowledge the beginning and end of his labors, yet his specialty necessarily carries him into other fields

bordering upon his own. The obvious meaning of the man who coined the phrase seems to be, that he feared to encounter the specialist because of his greater proficiency, or expertness, in his own particular line of thought. And to bolster up our interpretation, we have the other famous old Latin saw *"Non multa, sed multum"*—not a mere surface knowledge of a great variety of subjects, but a deep and thorough knowledge of a few, or even one. In short, with the ancients it was not quantity, but quality, that counted; not numbers, but thoroughness. Of course, the wider our range of information, the better equipped we are for life's struggle; but as we have only a limited supply of brain force, we cannot hope to master all, and the next best thing is to get a thorough grasp of some one at least. In this connection we may aptly apply the words of Emerson: "The one prudence of life is concentration."

It is precisely this lack of mental thoroughness that gives rise to so many unnecessary and utterly useless controversies, which serve only to embitter the opposing parties, and leave the hearers as badly muddled at the finish, as they were at the start, if not more so. Cardinal Newman writes: "How many disputes we have listened to, that were interminable, simply because the disputants understood neither themselves nor each other!" It is not at all rare to find men contending fiercely over subjects upon which they are at bottom agreed. Their difference is in reality but a matter of words, arising from the

use of different, and apparently opposite, terms to express the same idea, or the same term for things entirely different. Such a thing is not likely to occur in discussions between men of thorough mental training; they are too logical, exact, and accurate, for that sort of thing. It was this consideration that led Socrates of old to say, that if he could find a man able to define and divide accurately, he would gladly follow him to the ends of the earth.

It follows from this, that educational systems which aim at "cramming," rather than thoroughness, are radically wrong. It is not the purpose of education to cover the whole field of human thought and endeavor, but to instil sound principles of thought and action, and to supply methods. It will not take the shrewd observer long to note the difference between the products of the two systems—the wrong and the right—between the shallow and the thorough man. The jack-of-all-trades and master of none, the walking encyclopedia, may be a shining meteor for a brief space, but pin him down to logic and accuracy, and he flounders hopelessly. The thorough man may not be very brilliant on the surface, he may even be somewhat slow, but he is steady, safe, and sure to pan out better in the long run. He is the type that men feel they can trust.

While the value of thoroughness is not a recent discovery, it is true that now, more than ever, it has become an indispensable condition of success. In this age of specialization, there is

no room for the dilettante (unless, perhaps, as an ornament of "high society"). Only the man born heir to millions can afford to skim the surface. Those who aim at distinction, or even moderate success, must know how to do some one thing well; and to do that, they must direct all their researches to the end they have in view. It must be to them the alpha and the omega, the center to which all lines converge. Desultory study and reading may be good enough as a form of recreation or amusement, but is not likely to prove of any great practical benefit. What Carlyle says of life in general, we may well say of the intellectual life in particular: "The man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder—a waif, a nothing, a no man."

[*February 16, 1910.*]

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

IN everything that came from the pen of Robert Louis Stevenson, the observant reader is aware that the author has a moral lesson to inculcate. This is particularly true of the work whose title forms our present caption. "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is the old, world story of good and evil striving for the mastery of the human heart; it is the conflict ceaselessly going on within us between our better and our worse self, between spirit and matter, reason and pas-

sion, the angel and the brute. It was the consciousness of this struggle that made the old pagan philosopher exclaim: "I see and approve the better course, but follow after the worse!" It would be difficult to find a more vivid description, than St. Paul's pen picture of the fierce battle between the elements that go to make up what Stevenson terms man's dual nature. It is a picture drawn not from hearsay, but from the memory of the Apostle's own bitter experience: "To will good is present with me, but to accomplish what is good, I find not. For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil which I hate, that I do. I am delighted with the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind." And from the depths of the agony caused by this continuous, and at times seemingly unequal, struggle, he cries out: "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

Assuredly there is a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde in each and every one of us—the Jekyll part of us tending upward, the sinister Hyde well content to remain on the brute level. Many a man is Dr. Jekyll to the outside world, and the odious, monstrous Hyde, in his own home circle. Many there are who show the Jekyll side cleverly enough in church on Sunday, and with Hyde-like heartlessness, bleed the poor, the widow, and the orphan, during the rest of the week. As some one has well expressed it: "They are ready to offer their prayers on Sunday, if on Monday they

may go into the market place, and skin their fellows and sell their hides."

Dr. Jekyll is a good man, a benevolent and a lovable man, and so are we all when we follow the promptings of our better nature: when reason, or conscience, holds sway over the unruly passions. But when it wearies for a while of the bitter strife, and loosens its grip on the reins, the unchecked animal, Hyde, goes bounding forth on his career of license. The pampered children of luxury may smile, with mingled feelings of contempt and pity, at the policy of the old ascetics, but in that, they only manifest their own want of sense. For, after all, the ascetics are very wise men, from a philosophical, as well as from a religious, point of view. They realize that the passions are to the reason what the horse is to the rider, and that, if they would retain the mastery, they must occasionally use the bit and the spur. If they are somewhat stern in dealing with the brute element of their nature, it is not out of hatred, but with a view to its own ultimate best interests. It is because they love it wisely and well. They are following the practice of St. Paul, who tells us that he chastised his body, for the purpose of bringing it into subjection.

The end and aim of both civilization and religion is nothing more or less than to establish and maintain an equilibrium between these two opposing forces—reason and passion. Civilization is not measured by wealth and luxury, or even by the prevalence of book learning; for men-

tal culture may co-exist with the grossest animalism. It is not unusual to hear of born savages, who have been reared in the lap of science and luxury, hearkening to the call of the wild, and returning to the barbarous customs of their forbears. No reputable authority on ethics has ever yet defined civilization as a state in which electrical appliances, aeroplanes, railroads, Dreadnoughts, and magnificent buildings, abound. One and all, they tell us rather that it is the dominance of reason over passion.

Eternal self-restraint is the price of success, in the struggle between Jekyll and Hyde. Every unlawful indulgence granted the passions strengthens them, and withdraws them farther beyond our control. It is far easier to change from Jekyll to Hyde, than from Hyde to Jekyll, and if we repeatedly indulge the Hyde craving, it is probable that we will one day reach a stage whence return will be next to impossible. Those who have read Stevenson's story know that poor Dr. Jekyll tried it once too often. And so may we.

[*February 29, 1910.*]

IS HONESTY THE BEST "POLICY?"

"AN honest man's the noblest work of God." Aye, verily he is, and pity 'tis, that this noblest of God's works is not very much more in evidence. It is not a question here of common honesty in matters of justice, for we are opti-

mistic enough to believe that honest men, in that sense, are not so rare. We speak rather (after the mind of the poet) of all-round honest men, of thoroughly just, truthful, and candid men—open and above-board, both in deed and expression; in brief, our theme is of men who seem just what they are, and are just what they seem.

True, this uniform honesty does not always pay, from a financial or a social point of view, and the man who seeks such a reward for his honesty may be sorely disappointed. The Wednesday articles of the past month or so, emphasize the truth of Longfellow's remark, that "things are not" always "what they seem." And yet most people—or, anyhow, a very large proportion—judge solely by the seeming. Their estimates and appreciations are often based on appearance, instead of reality. And so it frequently happens that the sham makes a far better impression than the honest man; for the sham carries his good points on the surface, while those of the honest man may be hidden in the depths. The very honesty of a man will make him scorn to exhibit his good traits, while the parading of the virtues he has, and the counterfeiting of others he has not, make up the very life of the sham.

They say that "honesty is the best 'policy,'" and the saying is generally accepted as true. No doubt in the long run honesty is best. It isn't the real sense of the saw, but the somewhat equivocal wording, that makes us pause—it's the "policy" part that sets us thinking. Is honesty,

after all, the "best policy?" In point of fact, do sensible men ever adopt it merely as a matter of policy? Certainly it does not, as a rule, tend to make one either rich or popular. That it is an unfailing commercial help—especially in view of modern industrial conditions—may be reasonably called in question; and while we would not, for the world, be unjust to any definite individual, we cannot refrain from dropping the almost needless remark that it is not always the downright honest men who succeed in amassing the millions. (*Verbum sat sapienti.*) In the matter of competition, the unscrupulous merchant has, far and away, the advantage over the honest man of business, and with a little native shrewdness, the game of commercial sleight-of-hand may be long drawn out, without any great fear of detection. And as regards the social side, honesty doesn't seem to be a whit more profitable. It won't do at all for the professional politician; it would prove his undoing, in very short order. It would never do for the diplomat, or the typical society man, or any other whose chief aim is to please, or curry favor. The popularity hunter can't afford to be honest. He must have the glad hand, and the warm grasp, and the deceitful smile, or the affected horse laugh, for all alike, mean and noble, bad and good. Whatever may be the feeling of contempt lurking deep down in his heart, he must perforce greet everyone who can be of use to him, as a friend and brother.

But whither does all this lead? the reader may well ask. What is the drift of it? Is it

meant to imply that honesty and success are incompatible? Decidedly no; for facts innumerable prove the contrary. It does mean, though, that honesty does not necessarily, or unvaryingly, bring success in its wake, and that, if honesty is to take root and thrive, it must be in a more fertile soil than mere policy or expediency. Honesty is its own reward. It may not be best as a "policy," and it is wrong to regard it as such. It may not add much to our wealth or popularity, but it is worth infinitely more to us than gold or fame. It is against the danger of viewing honesty as a worldly-wise "policy," that we would sound an alarm; for those who practise it in that spirit, without any higher motive, not finding it quite what they expected, but rather financially unprofitable and impolitic, are not unlikely to end by throwing it overboard, and making a complete wreck of it.

[*March 3, 1910.*]

MORE ANENT HONEST MEN AND SHAMS

A WELL-KNOWN circus man once declared that the people like to be humbugged, and when we think of the success attained by so many adepts in the art of bluffing, his dictum seems to contain more than a modicum of truth. Let a man put on a bold front and give out as gospel truth something the public wants to believe, and he is pretty sure of a favorable hear-

ing. The *vulgus* generally gives ready credence to the clever and brazen sham. Carried away by an overwhelming wave of enthusiasm, without stopping to demand solid and substantial proofs, it acts first and thinks later. History, both written and unwritten, contains numerous instances of this public gullibility—some of very recent date. The cause and the remedy are, or ought to be, quite obvious. The success of the colossal humbug is due to our slipshod and haphazard acceptance of unverified statements; and our past embarrassing experiences in that line should make us, not unreasonably suspicious, but a little more desirous of getting below the surface, and sifting the wheat of plain, unvarnished truth from the chaff of downright lying and insincerity.

In the little things of life, as well as the bigger ones, we are not infrequently "taken in," betrayed and humbugged by the plausible and smooth-tongued sham. Tennyson has said that "words, like nature, half reveal and half conceal the soul within." He meant, of course, that all spoken language is imperfect, and inadequate to express our deepest thoughts and emotions. But his assertion is doubly true of the sham, who deliberately employs speech, not to discover, but rather to hide, his real meaning. Half truths, skilful evasions, cant, equivocations, and lying compliments, are his political and social capital. To those who can see through the typical, professional sham, there is scarcely in existence a more disgusting thing. It should not be difficult to conjure up a mental image of the creature.

He is found in all walks of life, and is in all substantially the same detestable specimen of the Pecksniff variety. He makes himself all things to all men, to gain all for himself. He can be readily recognized by his pious cant, and his feigned sympathy, and his blatant professions of zeal for the interests of those who may be of use to him. He seems to feel that unless he continues professing, and excusing, and disclosing his exalted motives, the foundationless structure of his reputation will totter and fall. As for the genuinely honest man, who has his faults and knows and admits them, he must at times be almost green with envy on beholding the self-satisfied sham, who is never at fault, or, if he be now and then apparently in the wrong, it is only apparently, because his purposes or intentions were so good, so noble! All honor to honest Carlyle with his manly hatred of shams and shamming. He may have occasionally mistaken honest men for shams, but of the soundness of his principles there can be no doubt.

And yet, in spite of our just and natural loathing for the sham, he often prospers where the honest man fails. There are legions who are unable, or who won't take the trouble, to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious, between honesty and sham. Flattery is sweet to most people, even when they know it is flattery. The honest man says what he means and means what he says. He is not given to flattery or empty, and still less lying, compliments. He sticks to the bald and naked truth, and the truth some-

times hurt and rankles. Though he is not necessarily brutal, he may easily appear so to those whom the shoe pinches. Wounded susceptibility or vanity is apt to regard him as rude, uncouth, boorish, and unfit for polite and cultured society. Social ostracism is not uncommonly the meed of thoroughgoing honesty, and certainly society is none the better off for such shabby treatment of honest, upright dealing. The poor opinion of the unthinking means little or nothing to the honest man. The loss is society's, not his. His consciousness of right, and proper self-respect, will more than make amends for the lack of vulgar approval or applause.

If sterling honesty is not more easily recognized and better appreciated by many of us, it is because our methods of measuring moral worth are wrong. A sense of justice and fair play, and a love of truth, would suggest that we change the standard—that we base our estimate of character, not on honeyed words, or oily manners, or superficial accomplishments, but that, brushing aside mere accidents and appearances, and digging beneath the surface, we get at the substance, at the real man within. The gold-plated ornament may be fairer far to the eye than the rich unwashed nugget of gold, but when it comes to a question of choice, only the veriest simpleton would prefer the shining, pretty, but comparatively cheap, thing to the plain, but rich, gold nugget.

[*March 9, 1910.*]

THE POWER OF ASSOCIATIONS

HUMAN character is shaped largely by the persons and events that enter into our lives. Great events influence us, but great personages influence us still more—with their living voice and look, and the living soul breathing and shining through them. We are continually influencing others, and being in turn influenced by them. In this respect the moral, like the physical, life is a veritable series of chemical actions and reactions. Professor Drummond aptly characterizes the process as "the alchemy of influence." There is nothing at all strained or far-fetched in ascribing hypnotism itself to the influence of a strong mind or will over a weaker. And, though it is but seldom that these influences reach the hypnotic stage, it is safe to say that most persons with whom we associate for any notable length of time leave their impress on us for good or evil. The stronger the character, the more we find to admire in it, the greater, of course, is the influence. The biographies of eminent men show clearly that their mental and moral development has been largely influenced by their early, and sometimes by their later, associations. Though long-time bosom friends or boon companions may, and often do, differ in regard to minor details, we usually find them in accord on all essentials. So, too, with husbands and wives who are well mated

and congenial, and who have for many years traveled up life's steep hill together. As time rolls on, they become more and more alike in their habits, their mode of life, their way of looking at things—in short, in a general trend of thought and character. It is the influence, conscious or unconscious, which each exerts upon the other.

We speak of those who have the faculty of attracting or influencing others as being endowed with personal magnetism. But there is a relative, as well as an absolute, personal magnetism; and there are comparatively few who do not wield some influence for weal or woe, at least within their own little circle. Their power may be confined within very narrow limits, but it means as much to those who are under its sway, as greater influence does in wider spheres. If this magnetic influence be elevating, needless to remark, it behooves us to keep well within its area. If, on the contrary, it prove sinister or baleful, it is of momentous importance that we withdraw ourselves far beyond its range. Of course, our associations are not always of our making; sometimes they are forced and unavoidable. But where a choice is possible, too much stress cannot be laid on the necessity of prudence and discernment in making it. While this is particularly true of the young, it is not without its bearing on their elders. Old and young, we are all subject to these influences; and the misfortune of it all is that the evil influences are usually quicker in action, and more effective, than the good.

The Chinese have a very apt proverb to express the ease with which evil outstrips good in the race for the mastery of man's heart. "Error travels around the world," they say, "while truth is putting on her boots."

One may be good enough at the time of his entrance into evil companionship, but sooner or later, his connections are bound to tell on him. It is almost a truism to say that "evil communications corrupt good morals," or that "a man may be known by the company he keeps." And all who have a proper regard for their own moral life, and the welfare of those intrusted to their care, will be as wary of evil associations as they are of infectious diseases—and even more so, inasmuch as the moral well-being is of far greater moment than that of the body.

[*March 16, 1910.*]

SLANDEROUS TONGUES

IT HAS been well and truly said that "the pen is mightier than the sword," and the saying applies even more forcibly to the human tongue, which was very much in evidence, and had wrought a world of good and evil—of blessing and cursing—many cycles ere pen and ink were known. It is the tongue of the eloquent orator and enthusiast that has, in all ages, incited men to deeds of wondrous daring and heroism; and it is the tongue, too, of fiery marplots and dem-

agogues, that has led to the most disastrous upheavals in the world's history. But we need not betake ourselves to the chronicles of old to form an idea of its power for weal or woe, or to find traces of the ruin it has caused. We have all the evidence we want at our very doors. Who, among us, with even a very limited experience, can be ignorant of the havoc wrought by the vile tongue of the slanderer—of the fair reputations it has blighted, the promising careers it has blasted, the brilliant prospects it has ruined? How many are the happy homes it has wrecked, and the loving hearts it has torn apart and crushed beneath its merciless iron heel!

The simple lie, which hurts only the liar himself, is bad enough, for "lying lips are an abomination" not only "to the Lord," but to every decent man and woman as well. The charge of untruthfulness is one which even the child resents with all his might. He may stand a great deal of bantering, but if he has a spark of self-respect in his make-up there is one taunt which his young spirit will not brook. Call him a liar, and he is up in arms at once. There is something so indescribably mean about lying that the veriest stripling seems to feel it instinctively from the moment he begins to reason. But if simple lying is bad, the two-edged sword of slander, which wounds both accuser and accused, is immeasurably worse—worse, in some respects, than theft and murder. For it is the theft and murder of that which people of honor and spirit prize far more highly than money, or even life itself.

In the category of crime there are few acts to compare, in baseness and malice, with deliberate, cold-blooded calumny. The Founder of Christianity was exceptionally lenient with most classes of sinners, but the slanderer formed an exception to the general rule. In fact, almost the only instances of His indulgence in bitter invective, are His references to the libelous Pharisees, who were constantly misrepresenting Himself and His work.

Perhaps one of the strongest chapters in all literature is St. James' indictment of the unbridled tongue. The writer evidently felt deeply on the subject, and knew from experience the truth of the words he penned: "Behold how small a fire kindleth a great wood! And the tongue is a fire—a world of iniquity * * * being set on fire by hell." Man has succeeded in taming all sorts of beasts and birds, but there is one little force which still remains untamed and unsubdued—the venomous tongue, a restless evil, full of deadly poison. In the matter of libel, as in most other things, destruction is easier than construction. It is far easier to pull down and destroy a reputation, than it is to build it up again. And yet, build it up again the destroyer must, if he would square himself with justice. There is no alternative. No amount of money will compensate for the loss of one's good name. Nothing short of complete vindication will suffice to right the wrong, and clear the defamer in the High Court of Justice.

[*March 23, 1910.*]

WOMAN'S POWER FOR GOOD

SORRY wights there are—a few—who would argue from the time and manner of Eve's creation, that woman was an afterthought in the mind of the Almighty. We would rather believe that the Lord purposely delayed her introduction to make Adam appreciate her all the more, after the trying experience of his loneliness and incompleteness. For, despite his exceptional gifts of body and mind, until her coming he was but half a man. What a pathetic figure he must have cut in Eden's beauteous domain, beholding, wherever he turned, the happiness of the mated birds and beasts—he alone of all God's creatures without a partner like himself.

The first woman certainly owed something to man, but ever since, man has been the debtor. He gets far more than he gives. There isn't a man in his sober senses who doesn't realize this indebtedness. Whatever good there is in us, is due in great measure, to the noble women who influence our lives. Nor is there a man on whom the influence of a good woman is wholly lost. It may not be immediately evident, but it is bound to tell in the long run. Woman's role in human progress—in civilizing and humanizing the race—is by no means second to that of man. It may be less showy or apparent, but it is none the less real and important. Hers is the fundamental work, and, if the whole truth were known, many of the great deeds for which men get credit

are primarily due to their self-effacing helpmeets. Every student of history knows this and could give, off-hand, abundant proofs of our contention.

In private and public life, on the individual as on the body social, her influence is greater far than appears at first blush. She herself may not be conscious of it, but she is the real power behind the throne. Barrie's "What Every Woman Knows" shows cleverly, and with perfect truth, how woman often does the work that really counts, pulls the strings, and sets the machinery in motion, with little credit from the beneficiary, who, in his blindness and conceit, thinks he is "it." In storm and stress and sickness, in sorrow and failure, it is to woman's inspirations, to her kindly heart and skilful hand, that man turns for counsel and relief. So long as woman keeps within her own proper sphere, her power for good is almost beyond the range of calculation. She has in her hands the making and molding of the future voters and officials of the land. Their moral training is largely hers, and whatever tends to the child's moral betterment, certainly makes for good citizenship.

It isn't however, by antagonizing man that woman will best succeed in attaining her destiny, but rather by a hearty co-operation with him. So God and Nature intended, and so it must be. It is useless to kick against the goad. The Almighty made us what we are, and we can't unmake ourselves. Gracefully or gracelessly, we must perforce submit. Man has his mission and woman has hers, and it is not by clashing that

either will accomplish anything worth while. The secret of success is a skilful union of forces working together in harmony and love for the common good.

Just a word about the other side of the picture. If there is anything on God's earth more disgusting than an effeminate man, it is surely a mannish woman. The Amazons of the French Revolution have shown us the depths of fury and heartlessness to which the unsexed woman can descend. The power of the womanly woman for good is equaled only by that of the unwomanly woman for evil. Again, in speaking of woman's influence for good, we are not referring to the butterfly type, the vain and frivolous woman whose ideals never rise higher than dress and pleasure, or the girl whose smattering of the arts and tongues and sciences makes her ashamed of the parents who stinted themselves to give her the little her brains are capable of holding. The animated doll may be pleasant enough to look at, or useful as a piece of household furniture, but from the standpoint of good influence, she is decidedly a minus quantity.

We are not so sure that the world has any need of the "new woman" as she is commonly understood. The old-fashioned, sensible, womanly woman of bygone generations was good enough for the Creator's plans, and taken all in all, it is extremely unlikely that she can ever be improved upon.

[*March 30, 1910.*]

SELF-APPOINTED JUDGES

FEW, if any, of us get our just deserts in this life. In nearly every instance it is a case of over-praise or over-censure. Passion, bias, prejudice, are usually too strong to admit of an impartial judgment. In forming our estimates, the factors of love and hate are far more potent than truth and justice. When there is question of a friend, we often wilfully blind ourselves to his evil side and see only the good. Or, if we can't close our eyes to the bad, at least we manage to put the best possible construction on his intentions. On the contrary, if the subject under discussion be an enemy, or one for whom we have an aversion, our methods are just the reverse. We can see no good in him; or if the good is too manifest to be denied with any show of reason, we proceed to question his motives. It is the same old gag adopted by Christ's enemies in the matter of casting out devils. The facts were patent to all. But, said the libelous Pharisees, He has an understanding with Satan himself— He is in league with him; "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils."

So long as we maintain one standard for friends, and another for foes, so long as we rest content with shallow and superficial judgments, so long will men fail to get the verdict they deserve; it will be ever either too lenient or too harsh. The world at large, as well as its jails, is full of the victims of circumstantial evidence.

It is the comparative few (if any) who are properly labeled. We pass by the rough diamond as of little or no account, and treasure the glittering gewgaws. The world flouts some of its greatest heroes while living, and erects noble monuments to them when their eyes and ears are closed to the sights and sounds of popular applause. It strains to its bosom, and clasps in fond embrace, the sleek and fawning hypocrite only to find out all too late that it has been cherishing a viper. As the late Father Tabb so charmingly puts it:

> Their noonday never knows
> What names immortal are.
> 'Tis night alone that shows
> How star surpasseth star.

There is no blame attaching to man for the fallibility of his judgments. They can't be otherwise than fallible or defective, since he has not the proper data to work on. But the very fact that our human judgments are so fallible, should at least make us a little more modest and diffident, and induce us to form our opinions more slowly and cautiously. Some must of necessity pass judgment on others—their position demands it. And all that can reasonably be expected of such is that, in forming their judgment, they make the best use of the materials at hand, and strive to be just and impartial. But for him who undertakes to decide without authority or competency, there is no valid excuse. If he be a Christian, his religion will tell him as much. The gentle Christ was rather severe on self-con-

stituted judges: "Judge not that you may not be judged; for with what measure you mete, it shall be meted to you. * * * Judge not before the time. * * * There is One that judgeth," etc. Nor were His apostles a bit more lenient: "Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."

Life is hard enough at its best, without trying to make it unendurable by picking out microscopic flaws in the lives of our associates. And, unless grave public or private interests are at stake, the principles of human brotherhood demand that we put the best possible interpretation on the conduct and motives of our fellowmen. True, there are exceptions. Duty—a regard for the well-being of society at large—may sometimes compel the ministers of justice to incline to suspicion and severity. But, as a rule, when the arguments for and against are equally good and strong, why not apply legal methods, and give the accused the benefit of the doubt?

[*April 6, 1910.*]

MORAL BACKBONE

MORAL courage deserves its monuments, no less than physical prowess. There is no lack of tributes to the latter, but the former is not so well cared for. Yet, of the two, moral courage is unquestionably the more worthy of

esteem. It requires greater strength of character and more self-sacrifice than does physical bravery. There is many a one less afraid of swords and bullets than of adverse public opinion, or the loss of friends. Everybody admires the fearless soldier. There is a certain eclat about him and his deeds that goes far to compensate the spirited and fame-loving man for his sacrifices, and seems to make it worth his while to risk even a life. But everybody does not always admire and, still less, love, the man of strong, moral backbone. Those whom he antagonizes—and they are necessarily many—are likely to bear anything but good-will toward him. Not his the shining halo that surrounds the head of the brave son of Mars. And yet, to express fearlessly one's honest convictions, when there is nothing to gain but everything to lose thereby; to stand up for them, and fight for them, with friend and foe alike; to become willingly, for their sakes, the prey of malignant tongues; to forego popularity, and, if need be, sacrifice his very friends, for what he holds to be right and just, is assuredly something more genuinely heroic than risking one's life on the glorious field of battle. To espouse a popular and winning cause is no great feat, but to stand up boldly for justice and truth when power and pelf are arrayed against them—that is the act of a man. In attempting to give due credit to the morally courageous we don't, of course, include the ever "consistent" man, if by "consistency" is meant ignorant self-opinionatedness, bull-headedness, or unreasoning obstinacy—and frequently

that is just what is meant. Only the fool never changes his mind. The wise are ever the first to recognize and rectify a mistake, when it is pointed out to them. And they lose nothing thereby. The very best of men, and the most honest, have changed sides and beliefs, and the sensible people of the world thought none the less of them for it. It is the weak, timid, changing expression of an unchanged belief, the cowardly veering or backsliding, due to fear or influence, that merits censure. There may not be much in the way of glare or glitter about the man who braves the anger of his associates, in defense of his neighbor's good name, yet many a one whom no bodily peril can stop or stay, will balk at speaking out his mind when his fellow-man's reputation is being torn to tatters by the foul, envenomed shafts of calumny.

In what we have said, there is no wish to deparage martial ardor or prowess. Nor is there any danger that we could do so even if we would. It is not that we admire physical courage less, but that we love moral courage still more. If we were as lavish in our recognition of moral backbone, as we are in raising shafts to the memories of famous soldiers, and conspicuous examples of material benefactions, it would perhaps go far toward implanting and fostering in the rising generation a better than Spartan spirit—a love and appreciation of the quality most deserving of their admiration and imitation, a quality eminently conducive to the very best type of good citizenship. If this truth were duly emphasized

and impressed upon the youthful mind in the classroom, it would do more, both for the state and the individual, than all the ologies—with due respect to them—that were ever dreamed of. Even were this the only result of childhood's training, it would be something well worth while, and if the lesson were taken to heart, and put in practice, it would do away with the painful necessity of keeping everlasting tab on the chosen guardians of the public interests, and literally forcing them, by fear of material or political losses, to do their bounden and sworn duty.

[*April 13, 1910.*]

THE SACREDNESS OF AN OATH

SHOULD the day ever come, when the solemn oath calling upon God to witness the truth of what we say or promise, will be lightly regarded by the generality of men, it will be the day that sounds the death-knell of all human faith and trust. The oath is the highest tribunal of conscience—its court of last appeal. For the man who realizes thoroughly what it means, and really believes in a God, it is something supremely awe-inspiring; and nothing short of duty, or direst need, or, at least, the most justifiable utility, could induce him to take it. He uses it not as an ordinary, everyday confirmation of his good faith, but only as a last resort. If his oath

won't suffice to hold him to the truth, assuredly nothing else will. His case is truly hopeless; no confidence can be placed in him.

The oath is, in truth, nothing less than summoning the Omnipotent God into court, to serve as a pledge or security for our good faith. It is a bold enough venture even when we feel that we have justice and right on our side; and how can we fittingly characterize the act of one who dares to call on the name of the Almighty to sanction an injustice or to witness a lie? To make an equal—a fellow-man—a party to such an infamous proceeding, would be justly considered one of the most grievous wrongs we could inflict upon him; to treat a friend thus, is one of the meanest and foulest acts of treachery, and it is well-nigh impossible to conceive how even the most depraved could have the hardihood to attempt such trickery with his Maker.

The oath, then, is the strongest and last surviving safeguard of human truth and justice, of human faith and trust; and if that last, strong bulwark ever fails us, then will surely come the deluge. And yet, in spite of its awful sacredness, we have ample evidence from many quarters that the oath is treated very frequently with but scant respect, and that, too, by people who claim to believe firmly in God and His justice. The saloonkeeper who violates his oath by selling on Sunday, or to minors, would likely resent, with some force, the charge of insulting the Almighty. He will try to justify himself on the plea that his promise is a mere matter of form, extorted

from him—compulsory, hence not binding. So, too, the saloonkeeper's Sunday customer will often deny under oath the fact of his getting liquor, and seems to think that charity or friendship will excuse, if not sanctify, his perjury. Witnesses in other criminal and civil court cases sometimes act similarly, and perhaps for the same reasons as the foregoing. And as regards office-holders unmindful of their sworn oaths, we all know their name is legion. Doubtless, like the aforementioned saloonkeeper, they regard their oath of office as a mere matter of form, entailing no serious or real obligation.

Morality is certainly at a very low ebb where things have come to such a pass as this. Few words—none in fact—are needed to show the groundlessness and the nonsense of such excuses; and we can't help wondering if those who urge them really take them seriously. An oath freely (even though reluctantly) taken, or justly exacted, is strictly binding; and neither self-interest, nor friendship, nor sweet charity itself, can ever make it otherwise. To treat it as a mere empty form is a mockery of the Almighty. God does not lend Himself to empty forms. If quibbling and equivocation are unpardonable in ordinary intercourse between man and man, they are still more inexcusable when confirmed by a solemn oath. The only conceivable explanation of this frivolous disregard of sworn obligations by people professing belief in God and His justice, is thoughtlessness, or a failure to realize the nature of the act by which they call the Almighty God to witness the

sincerity of their plighted word. It is high time to awaken to a sense of its serious and sacred character, for our present looseness in the matter is gradually weakening, and allowing to slip from under us, this strongest foundation of faith and trust among men.

[*April 20, 1910.*]

FORCE OF EXAMPLE

GREAT is the responsibility of the men in high places, not only because of the trust committed to them, but also from the standpoint of example or influence. They owe to the public, as a matter of common justice, a conscientious performance of the duties of their position. This is an obligation which all duly recognize. They owe, too, on account of their prominence—what all members of the great human brotherhood owe in some measure—special efforts for the promotion of public morality. (This is a feature which is not kept so well in view.) Hence, when prominent public officials betray their trust—by peculation, gross negligence, connivance at wrong-doing, etc.—they are guilty of a two-fold breach—the one against common justice, the other a crime against social morality; and of the two, the latter is often the worse, because it is more far-reaching in its power for evil. The wrong done the public by notorious graft or thievery is

bad enough, but the permanent or indefinite injury done to public morals is still worse. The crimes of the men in the limelight are rarely, if ever, isolated acts. Seldom do they stand alone. Their worst feature is that they commonly beget a brood of vipers like unto themselves. As the cry uttered in the solitude is echoed and re-echoed from hill to hill; as the pebble cast upon the waters produces its apparently unending series of ripples, so with the public crime of him on whom the public eye is fixed. Its end no man can see; its possible disastrous consequences none can foretell. It is as likely as not to prove an endless chain. A Boccaccio may repent of his Decameron, but he cannot recall it, or undo its effects.

Those who are beyond the pale of example, or strong enough to resist its influence, are the rare exceptions rather than the rule. Where high moral standards are the vogue in public life, they are bound to inspire a regard for upright dealing in the rank and file of the people. On the contrary, where flagrant official bribery, graft, duplicity, vote-buying and vote-selling, partiality in the administration of justice, etc., are the order of the day, they are bound to react on the masses. First or intermittent glimpses of vice are apt to repel, but oft-repeated, face-to-face views of it, gradually familiarize us with it, and take away its sting and loathsomeness. They create an immoral atmosphere which we are forced to breathe, and only the strongest, or morally soundest, can successfully resist its disease-bearing

germs. When the governors are given over, body and soul, to immoral practices, it is difficult to see the ways and means of stemming the tide of corruption among the governed. "If the blind lead the blind, will not both fall into the ditch?"

And what we say of public men holds equally true of all who have the direction of others, whether in church or state, in the schoolroom or the family circle. It is of little use to insist on the teachings of the moral law, if we fail to practise what we preach. The object lesson of example is far more effective than the most learned disquisitions on morality. The men and women who live up to their convictions, by practising what they profess, have done more for morality and the social uplift, than all the wise, philosophic discourses of an Epictetus or a Marcus Aurelius. They are practical instances of the working of the moral law, showing in the concrete, the possibility of regulating conduct in accordance with its dictates. One man of the type of New York's Governor is worth more to the cause of morality than a host of theoretical moralists. "Don't do as I do, but do as I say," is good enough in its way. True, the principles of morality are ever the same—just as sound and binding—no matter how numerous or how prominent the men who disregard them. Nevertheless, we must take men as we find them; and the fact remains that, for the most part, they are, and ever will be, far more deeply impressed by our acts, than they are by our words or precepts. And the men and women whose upright lives

are sources of light and strength to those within their circle, deserve to have their names recorded, and their memories revered, as the most noble and useful benefactors of society.

[*April 27, 1910.*]

THE MORAL FEATURE IN JOURNALISM

THE distinctively moral element in modern journalism is not something extraneous to it, or merely grafted upon it. On the contrary, it is a perfectly natural feature, and one almost essential to the complete equipment of the present-day journal. For the many who lack either the time or the inclination to do any other serious reading, and for whom the daily newspaper is the chief or only mental pabulum, the iteration and reiteration of sound moral principles is a veritable godsend. It goes without saying that the modern press is not only a dispenser of news, but likewise one of the most influential of public teachers. It reaches a large class whom the pulpit fails to attract, and, in consequence, has it in its power to accomplish a vast amount of good, by becoming the willing ally of the professed teachers of morality. To catch the eye, and win the assent, of the thousands who will hearken to no professional moral guide, is surely no small gain, and gives the modern journal an opportunity of supplying a most pressing need.

Even if we consider the newspaper only in its function of advocate and defender of the people's material well-being, the moral feature must necessarily play an important part—at least as a means to an end. For there can be no enduring order, freedom, or prosperity, where morality's laws are widely or openly ignored. As well try to build a house without foundation or walls, as attempt to establish a society on any other basis than morality. As the immortal Washington said in his Farewell Address: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports * * * the firmest props of the duties of men and citizens." If this is true of all forms of government—even the paternal—it is doubly true of a democracy, whose members are the real rulers, and whose stability depends, not so much on force, as on the good will and virtue of its citizens. The arts and sciences are unquestionably valuable aids to civilization and prosperity, but they cannot compensate for a lack of the moral sense or the natural virtues. Virtue, not learning, is the strongest bulwark of society. A glance at the origin of any strong state—whether ancient or modern—will show that it is not necessarily the most brilliant or the most highly cultured that lay the solid foundation of government and steer the ship of state through the wildest storms. It is rather the men of real character and pronounced virtue. Whatever tends, therefore, to make men better and stronger morally, conduces likewise to their political and

economic betterment. The worth of a community is to be gauged, not by its wealth, but by the moral tone which pervades it. It is the height of unwisdom to look upon mere creature comforts, or animal satisfaction, as the end of government, or the measure of civilization. As Gladstone once remarked: "The question of greatest interest and importance is, not what manner of producer, but what manner of man, the American of the future is going to be."

And this is precisely the end and aim of the moral feature in modern journalism—to aid in molding better men and better citizens, by keeping constantly before their minds the high ideals to which they should tend; by standing aloft on the watch-tower and ever pointing boldly and unerringly to the eternal principles of truth and justice, which alone can accomplish the desired end. That the high-toned, moral journals have succeeded in their efforts, is sufficiently evidenced by the great moral awakening they have brought about in various parts of the country. They have stirred the people at large to a sense of their power and duty, and made the guilty tremble. The increased demand for the deposition and punishment of corrupt officials, and the substitution of honest men, the graft probes, etc., are substantial proofs that it has made good. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

[*May 4, 1910.*]

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRIFLES

SHREWD judges of character never take their cue from a man's big or exceptional performances, but rather from his ordinary, every-day, habitual manner of acting. And, of course, they are right. The big things are scarcely a fair test, for they put people on exhibition, and in such circumstances they are likely to strain and overstrain themselves to appear at their best, or even better than they really are. To know one's worth or worthlessness, he must be caught in unguarded moments, when he is not posing, or conscious of being observed. A straw will show the way the wind blows, and apparent trifles often afford the best key to human character. After all, the big things are the rarities. Life for the most part is made up of the little ones, as the broad universe is made up of the atoms; and it is the little things that usually make or mar. The philosopher and the student of history know full well that seeming trifles are often fraught with most serious consequences, and no man, of whatever rank or condition, who disregards the little things, will ever amount to much. Historian, artist, scientist, strategist, physician, lawyer and man of business, all alike recognize the fact that close attention to details is essential to success.

Some of the most momentous happenings of history can trace their origin back to seeming trifles, and the making or unmaking of the world's

great men depends not seldom on a little act of prudence or a little slip. It is the little social amenities too, the little acts of thoughtfulness—and not the grand dress parade—that show the real lady or gentleman. In this connection, the reader may recall the plain truths uttered in New York a few weeks ago, by a discerning man, anent the woful lack of manners in the great metropolis; and still later, the confirmation and extension of his charges by a member of the Federal committee appointed to escort the visiting delegation of Japanese business men. Had these statements been made by aliens, we might find reasons for resentment, but the fact that they came from our own, from judicious, fair-minded and competent Americans, who mention them with regret, and solely for the purpose of bettering conditions, is a sufficient voucher for their accuracy, even if we were not already painfully aware of our shortcomings in this respect. Their criticisms are not at all unjust or extravagant, and we might as well "acknowledge the corn." No good can come of closing our eyes to the facts. There is nothing to gain, and much to lose, in wilfully blinding ourselves to the manifest truth, however unpalatable. Observant and honest tourists are quick to notice, and frank enough to admit, the—to us—humiliating contrast between ourselves and some of the older peoples of Europe, in regard to the little things which don't cost much to the giver but often mean a great deal to the recipient; the little attentions and courtesies that lessen the woes of the stranger in a strange

land, and brighten and sweeten life generally. While there are undoubtedly numerous exceptions, it is undeniable that, in the average, taking man for man, we are lamentably behindhand in the matter, not so much in the big affairs of social life, as in the important little social amenities—in that "to the manner born" or bred-in the-bone politeness which characterizes even the peasant of Southern Europe. It is not that we are more radically selfish, or wanting in regard for others. It is rather the result of thoughtlessness, due to our habitual hurry and pre-occupation. Perhaps, too, because with us everything is on a big scale —the country itself, its institutions, manufactures, etc.—and being constantly confronted with big things, we are apt to lose sight of the little ones. But whatever the reasons for it, it is a distinction that we can well afford to drop without loss of prestige, and with considerable profit to ourselves from the standpoint of the social relations.

[*May 11, 1910.*]

DOING OUR OWN THINKING

WE ARE told by those who ought to know, that the Creator made no two things perfectly alike. His plan is harmony in variety. In His government of the world, too, we find the same scheme in operation. As Tennyson has it:

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

There would seem to be ground enough in this to justify the creature, too, in showing a little individualism, which is but another name for naturalness. It is perfectly clear, from the manner of our making, that God never intended thinking men to conduct themselves like a flock of sheep dumbly following the bell-wether. It is a most common and a most baneful habit—that of over-eagerness to get in the swim, of falling in line with ready-made conduct and opinions to which we would never think of subscribing if we only took the trouble to form our own convictions, and had the courage to follow them. There are, of course, people who haven't brains enough to think for themselves, and these must necessarily follow the leader or have no views at all. But for those who can do their own thinking, it is unmanly and unnatural to be everlastingly bowing and scraping to self-elected arbiters, or getting in line with the unthinking mob which blindly follows them. The *vox populi* is not always the *vox Dei*—or rather the seeming voice of the people is often but an echo, the unreflecting and weak acceptance of policies and views which they do not really indorse, and which they frequently adopt without examination or proof.

Truth and facts there are, and laws and customs, so well established that no man is justified in disputing them; for no man is morally free to reject the manifest truth. Such freedom would only pave the way to anarchy in thought and action. But beyond the pale of undisputed truth,

there are innumerable questions of taste, of art and literature, of fashion and politics, etc., which do not call for unanimity. They are among the things of which St. Paul says: "Let every man abound in his own sense." Centuries ago the great Augustine tersely outlined the proper policy in these matters: "In things necessary, unity; in doubtful questions, liberty; in all, forbearance." The habit of aping or imitating others, of letting them do our thinking and judging, begets artificiality and insincerity. It dries up the sources of mental and moral energy, and undermines the individuality or naturalness which constitutes the charm and life of all human society. Blind, unthinking partisanship is detrimental both to the individual and society at large. It is the reasonable independence of thought and action that makes a community sound and vigorous. Emerson once remarked that "it is the vice of our public speaking that it has not abandonment. Somewhere, not only every orator, but every man, should let out all the length of all the reins; should find or make a frank and hearty expression of what force and meaning is in him." In conduct and expression, where freedom of choice is legitimate, it wouldn't be such a bad idea to imitate the child, whose actions and attitudes are generally graceful, because they are the offspring of the moment, free from affectation and pretense. His naturalness saves him from that miserable abject slavery to parties and fashions which is so often the bane of his elders.

A pair whom we once met strolling through a famous art gallery will serve to illustrate the point we are trying to drive home. They were man and wife and, to all appearances, about equally matched in wits. The woman belonged to the genus of sham lovers of art. She had all the catch-words and cant phrases of the dilettante at command, and sought every occasion to give them utterance; but the husband frankly owned up that the only works of art that interested him were paintings of dogs and horses. Of the two, we would vastly prefer the old man. We may not have thought much of his taste, but we can't help admiring his honesty and naturalness. We feel that at least his opinions are his own, not borrowed from books and connoisseurs—and that's more than can truthfully be said of his esthetic consort. The pilfered opinions of the dilettante serve only to make him ridiculous to those who know. Whether in art or literature, in fashion or politics, it is the part of common sense to get on our own level and stay there Our opinions may not always be in accord with the majority, or even with the accepted canons of good taste, but at least they are our own, honestly come by, and truthfully expressed. And their honesty, truth and naturalness will make amends for many minor imperfections.

[*May 18, 1910.*]

GETTING THE PROPER FOCUS

HE WHO cannot put himself in the place of those whom he undertakes to criticise, will never become a just critic of men and measures. To judge the people of other times and other countries by our exclusive standards is rank injustice. In his character of historian, the chronicler of the past and the distant must be wedded to no fixed theories, for he is judge as well as recorder. Personally he may and must have his preferences, but they need not, and should not, influence his judgments. If he reads the past only in the light of the present, he is sure to be prejudiced. And furthermore, to render an absolutely just verdict, one must have a sort of sympathy with those whom he judges, must be able to look at things from their standpoint. And the same rule that holds good in matters historical, applies to all our common, everyday estimates of human acts and motives. The ordinary mortal, no less than the historian, needs the philosophic breadth of view, and the sympathetic touch, if he would escape the odium of partiality or bias. We may have good reason to consider our own standards the best ever, but that's not the question. Neither, by the way, has it the force of a mathematical axiom. There are many who don't deem our standards the best, and since it is not a matter of self-evident truth, they are perfectly entitled to their opinion. At any rate—and this is the important point—all do not look

at things as we do. Others see them their own way, and do them their own way. Some of them are placed in circumstances altogether different from ours, and they have, in consequence, a perfect right to demand that we judge them according to their own standards, not by ours.*

We free-born sons and daughters of Columbia are frequently wont to boast of a tolerance and breadth of view which our unguarded speech and conduct often belie. John Bull has not a monopoly of narrowness and insularity. There are others who arrogantly assume that their own institutions, customs, manners, etc., are perfect, and the rest all wrong; people who, in dealing with less progressive nations, never think of taking into account the effects of climate, soil and the various other hindrances by which they are beset. Apropos of this, a very energetic woman who spent five or six years in Cuban hospital service, remarked recently that, during her first few months on the island, she was disgusted with the apathy and indolence of the natives, but she added that in less than a year she had become one of them. Her admission confirms the truth of the point we are trying to make—that to judge others justly, we must put ourselves in their place, and make due allowance for their drawbacks. Unquestionably, in many respects we have gone far beyond the nations of the past, and the older

*Of course we are not speaking here of fixed and inviolable moral standards—of unchanging moral principles which are the same everywhere, and at all times, and about which there can be but one correct opinion. We speak rather of different national customs and manners, questions of taste, etc., about which there may be an honest, and perfectly legitimate difference of opinion.

nations of the present. It is but the natural working of evolution's law and gives us no right to boast, or to think less of those who have gone before. Distant posterity will find many a flaw in the things which we of the present deem so perfect—perhaps as many as we now see in the peoples who flourished "in the dark backward and abysm of time."

It would be impossible to emphasize too strongly the importance of getting the right focus when we attempt to pry into the actions and motives of our fellow-men. And until we get it, impartial justice or fairness is out of the question. In public and private life, we are too prone to set ourselves up as the standard of measurement—a virtual claim to infallibility. Whoso conforms not to our way of thinking and acting, is all wrong. Of all the various ends of education there is none of greater moment than this—to rid ourselves of narrow prejudice and one-sidedness; to school ourselves to look at events through the eyes of the actors who took part in them, and while holding fast to our own honest convictions, to give others, too, a little credit for sense and honesty. It is the presence of this trait, or mental attitude, that marks the best type of culture and good breeding, of genuine religion and sound philosophy. To its absence is due that baleful spirit of narrow sectionalism and bigoted intolerance, which has proved in every age the curse of humanity. Without tolerance, sympathy, and broad-mindedness, there can be neither historical equity nor

common, everyday justice and fairness, and until we get these indispensable requisites, we are surely in no position to sit in judgment on our fellow-men.

[*May 25, 1910.*]

THE AMERICAN SNOB ABROAD

THE EVENING SUN of May 17 gave some striking extracts from the impressions of a London Times correspondent who has been accompanying Colonel Roosevelt on his European tour. In substance, the extracts amount to this—that the Roosevelt tour has opened the eyes of cultivated Americans, caused them to realize that modern monarchs and monarchies are by no means an unmixed evil, and made them cease to think of Europe as the home of a "wayback," effete and decadent civilization. It is perfectly clear that the correspondent thinks Americans need to have their eyes opened. Nor is he alone in this. And, after making due allowance, who will say that his opinion is utterly unfounded? Unfortunately, too many of our fellow-countrymen don't content themselves with merely thinking the thoughts attributed to them. They act their thoughts, too, and reduce their theories to practice, both at home and abroad, thereby bringing not only themselves, but their country, too, and its people into disrepute. No doubt they think their spread-eagleism and arrogance very

impressive and awe-inspiring, something well calculated to generate a wholesome respect in the poor, benighted European. Instead of that, it begets the perfectly correct notion that they are vulgar upstarts.

Soon the tourist season will be in full swing, and the Americanos and Americanas, with well-thumbed Baedeker in hand, will be familiar and easily recognized figures in the streets, the art galleries, and other public buildings of the great European cities. Troops of our well-fed, prosperous-looking compatriots will be seen, day by day, losing their time gazing on the works of the great masters, and the grand old historic piles, with as much nonchalance as if they were inspecting a leg of mutton—and, we may safely add, with far less intelligence. However, this is not a crime. If there is any fault, it is a fault of the head and not of the heart, and they are more to be pitied than blamed for it. There is a far worse feature, and one for which they are fully responsible—and that is their too common exhibition of disagreeable, ill-mannered, coarse-grained conduct. The vulgar, ill-bred, purse-proud tourist, with his contempt for antiquity and scorn for traditions, and arrogant airs, is the laughing stock of all Europe, and a thorn in the side of his own decent countrymen. He doesn't want to be pleased; the Lord himself couldn't please him. He is simply waiting for a chance to voice his loud-mouthed protest, to proclaim anew the declaration of American independence—while the waiters smile and wink at

one another behind his back, as if to say: He has the money, but that's all. In such cases, one can't help feeling that the servants have more real gentlemanliness than those whom they serve.

In a way, tourist parties carry about with them the fair name of their country, and, truth to say, some of them do their unconscious level best to besmirch it. We don't mean to say that these people are representative Americans. Far from it. But, unfortunately, they are the only specimens that a large portion of the Europeans ever come in contact with, and consequently the only types on which they can base their estimate of us. And in following this plan, we can scarcely blame them, since many of our own compatriots get their opinion of a whole nation from the few disreputable samples which they have in their midst.

These remarks are made, not from any overweening desire to play the censor, but rather with deep regret—with a feeling of " 'tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true." They are meant only for the vulgar blusterers, for the creatures whose conduct is characterized by *The Evening Sun* of May 17 ("The Childish City") as "that somewhat absurd effervescence which passes in the roaring West for superhuman enterprise and energy." The reference is to some pushing Chicagoans who came very nigh turning their King Edward memorial service into a pandemonium. It would seem that those who make such a ridiculous and pitiable exhibition of themselves at home, can ill afford to pose as exemplars abroad.

And yet they are precisely the ones who do it, as soon as they get money enough to see the world. There is but one word suited to label these creatures properly, and that is the mean little word "snobs."

[*June 1, 1910.*]

MALICIOUS INNUENDOES

AMONG its "Proverbs and Phrases" *The Sun* of May 18 contained one which is worth more than a passing notice. It is this: "The most mischievous liars are those who keep sliding on the verge of truth." Of all society disturbers and reputation wreckers, the most artful and the most successful is the innuendo man—the vile creature who adopts the policy of the broad hint, or the malicious insinuation. The thoroughgoing slanderer is bad enough, but at least he leaves us a loophole of escape. His lie is likely to find him out some time or other. His charge, too, is something definite, something that we can put our finger upon—and not infrequently disprove. We can bring him to bay, and force him to make good, or confess himself the liar he is. But, unluckily, with the other fellow—the artful insinuator—there is no such means of redress. There is nothing really tangible to lay hold of. He avoids specific accusations, hints but vaguely, and if put to it, can easily wriggle out of the difficulty.

When founded on fact, the malicious hint often does vastly more harm than the full disclosure. It has about it an air of mystery, which brings on a train of imaginings, and begets groundless suspicions which would quickly melt into thin air were the whole truth known. More especially is this the case when the evil hint is blended with words of commendation: "He's an honest and a temperate man, etc., but"——Oh, that mean, vile, hypocritical little "but" that has severed so many friendships and befouled so many a fair name! Where so much of good is spoken, and the mean little "but" uttered with a regretful sigh, it often looks like real pity. In reality it is but decking out and garlanding the victim for the sacrifice. The encomium is used only as a means of attaining a dastardly purpose: "With colors fairer painting their foul ends." The slanderer is frequently but a clumsy blunderer. Not so the skilful innuendo man. He at least is no bungler. He is a real tactician, a genuine strategist. His is verily the refinement of cruelty.

While we are about the subject, it may be in order to recall that it is not only the deliberate, designing insinuator who succeeds in ruining reputations. The best of us sometimes accomplish the same deplorable result without at all intending it. "Evil is wrought by want of thought, as well as want of heart." Our good name is like the lily whose whiteness and purity are sullied by the one foul touch. It is so easy, in an unguarded moment, by careless words and hints dropped in the course of a conversation, to inflict

a damage which years of effort may be unable to repair. The thoughtless and hare-brained talker may work as much havoc as the malevolent, scoundrelly calumniator. As some one puts it:

> Many a shaft at random sent
> Finds mark the archer little meant,
> And many a word at random spoken
> May hurt or heal a heart nigh broken.

It may not be very good poetry, but it is certainly good, common sense. There are a few lines from Pope that might be remembered with profit, in connection with our theme: "Speak clearly if you speak at all; carve every word before you let it fall." They bear directly on the matter in hand, and afford an excellent motto, or rule of conduct. By far the best plan is not to speak at all of the evil we see in our fellow-men. But if we must speak, then let us at least be fair and square, just and honest. The whole truth or nothing. Better far the plain, downright truth than the mean, miserable, malicious little hint. Concerning the second point of the poet's advice, it seems to ask a little too much. We scarcely have time to carve every word before letting it fall. But at any rate, a little sober reflection on the serious evils—the vast amount of misery, hate and injustice—wrought by careless, imprudent speech might make us very much more guarded and cautious in touching upon the character, conduct, and motives of our neighbors. We should rightly consider ourselves to blame if we occasioned another's material loss or physical injury,

not only by positive acts, but also by gross negligence or carelessness, and his good name is of more concern to him than his material and physical well-being. As for the rascally innuendo man, he deserves no mercy or consideration, and should meet with none. He can't be punished legally, though his act is often worse than a penitentiary offence. But at least we can refuse to listen to him. We can show, by word and manner, the kind of regard we have for him. Finally we can and, in the interest of humanity, peace and brotherly love, should, consign him irrevocably to the hades of social outlawry.

[*June 8, 1910.*]

THE BEST PHILANTHROPY

GOD loves a cheerful giver, and true philanthropy is a service of both head and heart. As to the first: All practical charity workers are agreed that indiscriminate almsgiving is worse than none. It serves only to increase the already too large horde of lazy impostors, and tends to defeat the real end and purpose of charity, which is to set the needy on their feet, and give them a chance to help themselves. To give really effective aid—to bestow charity where it will do most good—the scientific method of observation and experiment is requisite. By this means alone can the philanthropist, or the Lady Bountiful, succeed in sifting the wheat from the chaff,

and in weeding out the shameless shams whose tricks and lies often sour the generous giver, and make him feel like turning a deaf ear to all appeals.

But while the head, or intelligence, is a necessary element in judicious philanthropy, it is certainly not the only element. The heart, too, is an indispensable ingredient. Unless head and heart join forces, and work together in unison, there can be little real good accomplished. This is not only the teaching of Christ and His Scriptures, or of churchmen. It is likewise the unfailing and unvarying conclusion of all who have given any serious and intelligent thought to the matter—even of thinkers animated by no religious purpose, but solely by concern for the interests of humanity. Without the brotherly love—the sympathetic touch that makes the whole world akin—our best efforts are shorn of half their effectiveness. "Man liveth not on bread alone." He needs the bread, of course, but he needs the sympathy too—and sometimes more than the bread. The best friend of the poor is the man who gives not only his money, but himself.

When men and women, the world over, come to look upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men, not as a mere pretty sentiment, but as an actual fact, then only, will genuine charity abound. The day of selfish egotism—of the subordination of the many to the favored few—is past and gone, let us hope, forever. The cry is no longer "Every man for himself and God for us all," but rather "Every man for his

brother." Time was when a Renan could say, without being tabooed, that "forty millions may well be regarded as dung, do they but supply the fertility which will produce one truly great man." The man who would dare voice such a sentiment today would be justly considered beneath our contempt. Nor is there anything novel in our modern methods of dealing with poverty and suffering in all its various forms. It is simply a case of "Back to Christ." Amid the ever-growing multitude of new-coined phrases—the greatest happiness of the greatest number—the substitution of altruism for egotism, etc.—some of us are apt to forget that our present attitude in these matters indicates no new philosophy, no new social system, but purely and simply a return to the principles of Christianity. The world may, and does, adapt these principles to new conditions, but it has never been, and never will be, able to improve on the principles themselves. Most thinkers who even deny Christ's divinity, and regard him only as a social teacher, will admit so much.

[*June 15, 1910.*]

THE MOTH AND THE FLAME

KEEP away from the fire if you don't want to get burned. With its wings singed, and its tiny anatomy fast shriveling up, the moth still persists in drawing nigher and nigher unto the

flame. It would seem that its first or second costly experience should make it wiser. But the glare of the light is too strong and alluring—stronger even than the instinct of self-preservation—and so it continues beating about till it is caught and held in the grasp of death. We marvel at its foolishness, and straightway do the same ourselves. The poor moth is not to blame for its folly; it doesn't know any better. Great man sometimes makes as little use of his reasoning faculty, as the moth does of its instinct. He wonders why it is that, in spite of his good intentions and resolutions, he relapses again and again into the evil habits which in his heart he detests, and is inclined to lay his failings at the door of fate, heredity, accident, etc. Evidently he has never brought home to himself with sufficient force, the truth of Franklin's homely but wise old saw, "God helps those who help themselves," or of the warning words of a far greater than Franklin, "He who loves danger shall perish therein."

Dr. Samuel Johnson used to wonder why he was so frequently unable to arise before dinner time. With all his great powers, it never seemed to occur to him that it was because he didn't get to bed in time. And so with ourselves. We are often surprised at our lapses, but without ever a thought of retrenching at the other end, of avoiding the occasions of these lapses. Young folk—and older ones, too—frequently dally and trifle with temptation, in the fullest self-confidence of being able to rein in and draw up at the

proper time. At starting, they haven't the slightest intention of going the limit; but they rely entirely too much on their will power, or perhaps on blind chance. The clerk who begins to dabble in stocks, and incidentally "borrows" his employer's money to get the wherewith, rarely foresees where he is likely to land. The youth who starts betting on the races, or any other form of gambling, as a pastime or temporary excitement, may be at first dead set against allowing it to develop into an overmastering passion. The man with a weakness for drink often begins by assuring himself that he won't go too far—not beyond one or two. The maiden who permits herself undue freedom of conduct, may have no thought of the end to which her frivolousness is apt to lead. But in all these cases, like the moth and the flame, the lure of the light proves too strong. Singed again and again, without at all profiting by past experiences, they persist in taking chances, till they are burned hopelessly, irremediably. For, in spite of our freedom of will, it is not always possible to stop when and where we will, on the down grade. Self-indulgence, or abuse of the will, weakens, and sometimes almost completely paralyzes it. Like the stone rolling down the hillside, the farther one goes down the steep declivity of evil, the more velocity he acquires, and the more difficult it is to call a halt. In fact, there must come a point at which halting is practically out of the question. We have it in our power to stave off this crisis, but if we suffer it to come, the issue is plain enough. As regards the physical

man, there are serious bodily diseases curable if taken in their incipiency, but almost invariably fatal if allowed to develop. In the moral order, too, it is comparatively easy to rid ourselves of evil tendencies, if they are taken in time; but if suffered to strike deep root, to become habits, the task may prove a Herculean one, and the stronger and older the habit, the more difficult is the task of uprooting it.

Should we ever reach the point at which some particular vice has become a sort of second nature to us, it will do no good to rail at fate or destiny. There is no fate for us but such as we choose for ourselves. We have it in our power to make or mar ourselves. If we choose to make, rather than mar, our destiny, we have the secret, given long ago by one who knew: "Resist beginnings."

[*June 22, 1910.*]

GROPING AFTER THE MYSTERIOUS

THE unseen world has ever possessed a strong fascination for the human mind, almost since time began. And this practically universal fascination has proved one of the most powerful arguments for the existence of a life beyond the grave. Much of this belief in things unseen is, of course, based on what both Christian and Hebrew accept as a revelation from the Almighty, and is, therefore, highly commendable. But as

the rank weeds continually spring up beside the useful plant, so, in all ages, the grossest and most ridiculous superstitions have kept pace with the solid and well-grounded truth. Restless minds, seekers after novelty, not content to remain on the beaten track, are ever wandering off into the devious by-paths of the illegitimate occult. It was so in the ancient dispensation, for we find the author of the book of Deuteronomy condemning, in the strongest terms, wizards, charmers, those who consulted soothsayers, fortune tellers, pythonic spirits, who observed dreams and omens, or sought truth from the dead: "For the Lord," he says, "abhorreth all these things, and for these abominations He will destroy them." All students of mediæval history are familiar with the practice of the Black Art in the Middle Ages. And in our own day, the rage for the occult has evidently not abated one jot or tittle.

A goodly proportion of these devotees of occultism are, of course, persons of abnormal and morbid personality—but not all. Many of them are sensible enough in the common affairs of life. Some have claimed that all men are more or less insane, and that between those pent up in the madhouse, and those on the outside, there is only a difference of degree. We would be among the very last to indorse this view; but if anything could win our indorsement, it would likely be the sight of so many persons, apparently normal and well balanced in business, politics, and most other matters, completely losing their heads, their reason and common sense, when there is question

of the occult. In their ordinary dealings, they wouldn't think for a moment of trusting an unknown man. They would be among the first to demand his credentials, and look into his antecedents. But when an Oriental mystic, or some other of the thousand and one brazen impostors appears on the scene, with a pretended message from the other world, and his boasted superior knowledge of things invisible, the ordinary laws of common sense are set aside. No matter how absurd and fantastic the new luminary and his lights, he is usually pretty sure of a hearing and a following. The popular gullibility in these matters is truly amazing.

It would seem that the empty vaporings of the pseudo-prophets would of themselves prove a sufficient safeguard against them; but if that won't suffice, we can find a sure and easy test in the words of the Founder of Christianity: "By their fruits ye shall know them," and their fruits consist chiefly of the coin they manage to abstract from the pockets of their deluded victims. For one who has anything approaching a correct idea of God, it is inconceivable that He would make use of such instruments, as mediums of communication between Himself and His creatures. That many wonderful spiritistic phenomena have actually occurred, seems to be fairly well established by the researches of level-headed, painstaking, unbiassed men like the members of the society for Psychic Research. But when we look into the character of those who claim superior insight into the hidden and the future, and

the nature of their communications, we can't help feeling that the majority of those who really have any exceptional knowledge or power of the kind, must surely get it from below, not from above.

[*June 29, 1910.*]

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

AN ex-convict—an Englishman—writing recently of his prison experiences, has this to say of himself: "I have served four terms in various prisons. I was rightly convicted of my first offense, but never since have I been given a fair chance to become an honest citizen again." And he goes on to relate how he was shadowed and hounded after his release, his footsteps dogged, and his every act suspected. There is nothing difficult of belief in his narrative. It is the old story of Jean Valjean. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him." It is hard for the fallen man to rise. What would pass unnoticed in those of spotless repute, is looked upon in his case as evidence of fresh guilt. And the saddest part of it all is, that the people who assume this unrelenting attitude toward the down-and-out, are not infrequently sticklers for the highest morality, aye, and loudly professing followers of the gentle and forgiving Christ, Who left the ninety-nine good sheep in the desert to seek the one that was lost, Who told Peter to forgive his brother, not

once, or seven times merely, but seventy times seven, and Who, in the case of the adulterous woman, closed the mouths of the self-righteous Pharisees, and put them to shame, by looking straight into their eyes and quietly saying: "Let him that is without stain among you cast the first stone at her." And one by one they guiltily slunk away.

There can be little doubt that He would act likewise if He were present in some of our saintly (*sic*) coteries of today when, with bated breath and whispered tones, they utter their solemn "Isn't it awful," concerning some poor wretch who, in God's sight, may not be very much worse than themselves. As an illustration of this, the reader will recall Christ's own parable of the proud Pharisee and the lowly publican. While listening to the boastful language of the former, we scarcely know whether to give way to indignation or laughter. His self-conceit is so childish and silly that we both despise and pity him. But not too fast. Perhaps if we examine his features closely, we may find in them some family likeness. He is by no means a rare specimen. There are plenty of him in the world. To speak plainly, there are unfortunately too few of us who have not a dash of the Pharisee in our make-up. We may not be so open and blunt and barefaced about it, but it is skulking there somewhere, hidden in the depths, and we do unconsciously exhibit it now and then, and precisely in the cases to which we are referring—in our attitude toward the offending. When we needlessly and unwarrantably

sit in judgment on our fellow-men, censure their conduct, and impugn their motives, are we not virtually acting the part of the proud Pharisee—standing up before God and the world and claiming exemption from the foibles and follies which we criticise in others? Is it not equivalent to the Pharisee's boastful prayer, "I give Thee thanks, O God, that I am not like this man"?

Human observation and experience indicate that those who least need mercy for themselves are, at the same time, the most merciful toward others; and, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, we can't help suspecting that there is something wrong, somehow or somewhere, with those who have nothing but words of condemnation for the weak and erring. It has been remarked that the temporarily reformed are often the most severe on vices in which they once indulged. We use the words "temporarily reformed" designedly, being mindful of the warning words of Holy Writ: "Pride goeth before destruction, and before a fall, the heart is lifted up." It is as certain as that two and two make four, that the unmerciful are not genuine Christians, for every page and every line of Christ's Gospel breathes mercy. Their religion is but a sham, a shadow, a tree without the vital sap. It may be fair enough to the eye, like the apple of the Dead Sea, but there is no substance in it. The heart is gone out of it. For the life and heart and essence of Christ's teaching is charity, mercy, forgiveness.

[*July 6, 1910.*]

THE MORAL ELEMENT IN EDUCATION

EVEN from the sole standpoint of the here and now, without any reference to a future life, there is nothing more desirable, or more necessary, than the spread of moral education. It is a work of the highest patriotism, for undoubtedly the welfare of our country hinges, not on material prosperity, or on brains and learning, but on a fuller knowledge of, and a stricter adherence to, the sound principles of morality. There is scarcely a dearth of brains or ability among our public men of today; yet day after day, *usque ad nauseam,* the press teems with disgusting accounts of public graft and corruption—a standing proof that the evil is due to a woful lack of the moral sense. No nation yet ever held together very long after it began to defy the laws of morality, to disregard the virtues of honesty and unselfishness, the sacredness of the marriage tie, respect for lawful authority, etc. It was this utter disregard that brought about the fall of Rome and the other great nations of antiquity; and if we are fated to go their way, sooner or later, it will be owing assuredly to the self-same causes. History repeats itself.

What our young people, and many older folks, too, need is a thorough and solid grounding in the eternal, unchanging, and universal principles of the moral law. M. Ferdinand Brunetiere, the late eminent French savant, gave us, some years

ago, in his article on "The Bankruptcy of Modern Science," a history of the ignominious failure of certain latter-day scientists to substitute the useful and expedient for the true and ancient code of morals. Unfortunately, there are legions who still attempt this miserable substitution. Only recently a physician of some prominence remarked, with a triumphant smile, apropos of a moral question, that we are living, not in the fourth, but the twentieth century. That seemed to him to clinch the argument. As if truth changed with the centuries; or what was murder in the fourth century, ceases to be murder in the twentieth! This man is only one of many, and it is to be hoped, for their own good and that of their patients, that he and others like him will learn that truth and justice stand fast forever.

[*July 13, 1910.*]

CRIMINAL IGNORANCE

THAT men are morally responsible, not only for the harm which they knowingly and wilfully cause, but also for the evil which results from conscious and gross negligence on their part, is an unassailable principle of ethics, but one which is unfortunately too often overlooked. It is an axiom of moral philosophy that "he who wills the cause, wills likewise the effect"; only indirectly perhaps, but nevertheless to such an

extent that he can justly be held accountable. We are taking it for granted, of course, that such a one foresees, more or less clearly, the damage that is likely to result, some time or other, from his action or omission. A man of this type may seek to justify himself on the pretext that he does not really wish the evil, and that, if it were in his power, he would do his level best to prevent it. But all the same he is willing to take his chances. His judgment warns him that his behavior is apt to lead to serious, and perhaps fatal, consequences, yet, for the safe of present gratification, or from culpable sloth, he is ready to run the risk.

Take, for instance, the medical student who fritters away his time at college, neglecting essential, or at any rate important, points of the healing art, merely "plugging" and "cramming" for examinations, and barely managing to sneak through—practically stealing a diploma. He may feel like congratulating himself on his supposed good luck, and be more than ever induced to believe that Fortune is blind of both eyes, but if he has any sense at all, he must realize that his certificate means little or nothing, that he is absolutely unqualified for the profession he is entering, and that, unless he makes up for lost time and opportunities, he is inevitably going to do a vast deal of harm to his future patients, through his guilty ignorance. At the moment of making a grave, perhaps fatal, mistake, he may be thoroughly earnest and conscientious, he may be utterly unaware of his error, but that's neither here

nor there. Despite his subjective assurance, his act is criminal, for he deliberately put in motion the cause from which he foresaw that precisely such errors would, in all probability, result. Such a one is, to put it rather mildly, a swindler, and sometimes worse than a swindler, for he imperils human life.

True, even for one of this class, there are exceptional cases; for example, hurry calls which admit of no delay, in which even a half-formed practitioner may possibly be better than none, and in which such a one is practically forced to act, and act quickly. Then, too, some of these men steady themselves later in life, when they come to realize fully the responsibilities they have assumed, and try to make ample amends for the carelessness of their student days. We are not speaking of them, but of the criminally ignorant who engage in regular practice; and the amount of harm done by these, the loss of life and permanent injury to health, the Lord alone knows. We mention the case of the physician, as affording a most striking instance of our meaning, by reason of the weighty interests committed to his trust, but it is by no means the only instance of the kind. The same holds true in one degree or other of the lawyer, the preacher—in fact, of everyone who has any work at all to do, even to the mending of a pair of shoes. And all who remain culpably ignorant of the duties of their station, be it high or low, are guilty of rank injustice to those whose welfare is endangered by that ignorance. But while the principle applies,

in some measure at least, to all—even the lowest—it goes without saying that the greater and the more numerous the interests involved, the more of a criminal one is for neglecting to acquire the knowledge requisite to perform his duties properly.

[*July 20, 1910.*]

LOVE OF ONE'S WORK

GIVING us the key to the philosophy of the present life, as well as the means of attaining the life to come, one of the sacred writers tells us: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." Emerson gives his readers pretty much the same advice, when he says that the best type of man is the one who does well whatever he can do. But he hasn't pointed out the means that will enable men to do well and easily whatever they are able to do. That means was given centuries since by the great Augustine of Hippo in these pregnant words: "Where there is love there is no labor; or, if labor there be, the labor itself is loved." That is the genuine secret of success in any calling—love of one's work, whatever the work may be.

As a rule, we don't consider burdensome the service we render a friend; and even should the service prove difficult and wearisome, our affection makes the very difficulty and weariness

something of a pleasure. The mother who stints and sacrifices herself for her children, spending anxious days and sleepless nights in their service, rarely stops to consider that she is doing something heroic, because her mother-heart is in love with her task, or rather with those for whom she undertakes the task. Few men ever worked harder than Napoleon. In the intervals of enforced cessation from military strife, his active mind was ceaselessly engaged on his legal code, or in drawing up plans of attack and defense, planning civic improvements, etc. Yet we don't know that he ever grumbled at being overworked, and the reason—because he was in love with his work. Many professional and business men toil harder and longer than the common laborer, without ever a word of complaint. On the contrary, they find their work a real pleasure, because they are thoroughly interested in it. And assuredly it is the part of wisdom for persons in any and every calling of life, to adopt the same tactics—to take things as they find them, and endeavor to make the best of them; to cultivate a lively interest in their lifework, and try to become perfect in it, no matter how menial it may appear. We say no matter how menial it may *appear*, for in the words of the poet: 'There is no great and no small to the Soul that maketh all."

It is a huge mistake to buoy up children with the false hope of becoming one day President of the United States, or Congressmen at the very least; or to encourage those who have not been sufficiently equipped by God and nature, to enter

the professions, which are already overcrowded with incompetents. Better far to urge them seek their own level and stick to it. There is many a man in the medical and legal professions today, neither happy nor wealthy, and with little chance of ever becoming so, who might have attained local fame, and a reasonable competence, as a first-rate cobbler, had he not missed his vocation through his ambitious strivings to land in the upper stratum of society.

That there is nothing degrading or undignified in honest labor, is a truth that needs to be more fully and deeply impressed on the youth of the present generation. If they take the lesson to heart, and heed it, it will be the means of making many of them a great deal happier and more successful in their journey through life. This may sound very much like a truism—it is a truism—but none the less it is too often lost sight of by the over-ambitious, but not over-wise, young men and women of the modern era.

[*July 27, 1910.*]

IDEALS

SPEAKING of ideals, Louis Pasteur once remarked: "Happy is the man who has a god in his heart"—the man who worships at the shrine of the beautiful, the true and the good. In the hurry and excitement of modern life, with

its hot pursuit of material comforts, if we would keep ourselves from degenerating into mere high-grade animals, or intelligent machines, if we wish to preserve and develop the moral side of our character, we must have a "god in our heart"—lofty ideals of truth, beauty and goodness—to which we can turn now and then for light and guidance and inspiration. This is no mere poetic fancy, or philosophic speculation, but an actual, practical, and living fact. It is the absence of these noble ideals that makes life not worth the living for so many, after they have been severely wounded by "the shafts and arrows of outrageous fortune." The man who has a "god in his heart" is never wholly daunted or overwhelmed by misfortune. No matter how serious his reverses may be, he has always something to fall back upon. The Jews of old were wont to ask: "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" And, in answer to their question, the greatest good of all times, the very Light of the World, came forth from the despised village; and so, too, the man of noble ideals, instead of repining at the inevitable ills which flesh is heir to, not infrequently manages to pluck his greatest victories from seeming defeat.

Cultured Europeans have often declared that the American ideal is the almighty dollar. Time was when the charge was not wholly unfounded; and in many quarters it has even now a fairly solid foundation. But, fortunately, its application to the American people as a whole, is gradually growing fainter and fainter; and it is highly

probable that the time is not far distant when it will be nothing short of a gross libel, and assuredly the sooner, the better. The strenuous life of the modern business world tends, no doubt, to develop strength of character; but if business success, or money-getting, is allowed to become the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of existence, the development is apt to be altogether one-sided. Without the gentler and nobler ideals—in fact, without a certain amount of day-dreaming—life is not unlikely to grow utterly sordid, dull and uninteresting. The modern trend is decidedly practical, and the tendency is to discard all that cannot be measured in terms of the useful or practical. In this connection, it can be said, with absolute truth, that there never was a time when the pursuit of high ideals proved useless. Such ideals may, indeed, have no money value, they may be of little or no benefit from a commercial standpoint; but they certainly have an inestimable value from the added charm and zest they give to life, and their power to rescue from the ennui and boredom which must sooner or later follow purely material pursuits.

Under present conditions, we are sadly in need of an admixture of idealism, or day-dreaming. Nor have we any reason to fear a moderate dose of it. There is not much danger of carrying the thing too far. We could not if we would. The rapidly revolving wheel of progress will not let us. There is no question that a modicum of the ideal would make life and its burdens more bearable. Put two men together in identical circum-

stances. The one will glean every possible bit of good from his surroundings. Everything is grist for his mill; all nature has a voice for him, and he, an ear for it. The other will stand in the very midst of God's wondrous works like one deaf, dumb and blind. The birds and flowers have no message for him; or rather they have, but he does not heed it. Of course, some are more gifted than others in this respect, some minds more closely attuned to nature. All can't be poets, but all can acquire an intelligent appreciation of natural truth, beauty and goodness. It is a habit of mind which can be cultivated by all. And assuredly it is well worth cultivating. Truly fortunate are they who, in the language of the poet:

> Find tongues in trees,
> Books in the running brooks;
> Sermons in stones,
> And good in everything.

[*August 3, 1910.*]

GOOD MANNERS AND ETIQUETTE

THAT "a book is not to be judged by its cover" is a trite old saying, and one which no sensible man or woman will call in question. But unhappily our practice often ill accords with our theories. Through heedlessness and lack of discrimination, we have come to associate the lady and the gentleman with a certain standing in

society, and with the observance of certain social conventionalities. There are not a few who would hesitate to term the hodcarrier or the washerwoman a gentleman or a lady, yet, in all propriety and justice, these people are often far more worthy of the appellation than those who flaunt it without challenge or question. Serious thinkers rightly distinguish between good manners or politeness, and mere etiquette. Dr. Maurice F. Egan, the United States Minister to Denmark, has observed that "the best manners come from the heart, the best etiquette from the head." And Cardinal Newman was evidently of the same mind when he remarked that "good manners are the outward signs of true religion."

It is possible for the very worst specimens of humankind to be the very best models of etiquette, but it is utterly impossible for such to be models of genuinely good manners. Many are wont to confuse these two—good manners and etiquette; but very little reflection will show that they are not at all identical. Etiquette holds much the same relation to good manners as elocution does to oratory, and a parallel may be fitly drawn between elocution and oratory on the one hand, and etiquette and good manners on the other. Books and masters and diligent practice may make a good elocutionist, but they can never make a real orator. There is a vast difference between the polished elocutionist, no matter how clear his enunciation, or how graceful his gestures, and the genuine orator. The former may please, but it takes the latter, be he ever so

homely and uncouth, to persuade, and carry his audience away with him. The orator, like the poet, is born, not made; his power lies, not in artificial acquirements, but in his own character and convictions. And so with etiquette and good manners. The former may be learned from books, for it is nothing more than a set of conventional rules laid down for the external guidance of society. But something more is requisite for really good manners. They must come from the heart; they are the product of character, and can no more be found in a radically bad man or woman than can wholesome fruit on a dead or rotten tree.

A perfect knowledge and observance of the rules of etiquette may co-exist with an utter lack of genuine good manners, and the best manners can often be seen in people densely ignorant of the first principles of etiquette. Etiquette varies with time and place, but manners are ever the same, the wide world over. The man or woman without heart or character may, on occasion, assume or ape good manners, but it is just as impossible to perpetuate such a deception as it is for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots. It is an artificial unnatural, forced position, and the thin veneer soon cracks. Apropos of this, it is said that the gods once transformed a cat into a lovely woman, and that she conducted herself with perfect propriety till a mouse ran across her path; but from that moment, not even the gods of high Olympus, with all their power, could make her act as a

real woman would have acted in the circumstances. And so with the man of artificial manners. When off his guard, and acting according to his nature, he will invariably prove the best argument for the point we are trying to make. We have all known men, poor in this world's goods, humble and obscure, unable even to read or write—men who would start with surprise if they heard themselves spoken of as "gentlemen"—yet richly endowed with the true politeness that comes from a good, kind heart. We have known, too, people blessed with every advantage of birth and education and fortune, totally lacking in the sterling qualities that go to make the real lady or gentleman. Their money and social connections may procure the title for them, but the wise know full well that the title is an empty one, wholly undeserved—all of which goes to prove the truth of Tennyson's assertion: "Kind hearts are more than coronets."

Nothing tends so much to brighten and sweeten social intercourse, and make life generally agreeable, as the little attentions, civilities and courtesies which we style good manners. And since good manners are the natural outgrowth of character, and kindness of heart, it stands to reason that one of our chiefest concerns should be the cultivation of the heart and the affections, and the upbuilding of character, through a development of the moral sense. This applies particularly to those who are responsible for the training of the young. It should be regarded as one of the principal features in the education of the

child. No amount of book learning, or worldly success, will compensate for a lack of good manners; while the possession of genuinely good manners will make ample amends for many little gaps in the field of human knowledge.

[*August 10, 1910.*]

THE CANKER—SELFISHNESS

HOLY WRIT tells us that "no one liveth unto himself" alone, and those who seek to live for themselves only, are misfits in the plan of creation. Selfishness is the baneful canker-worm that eats out the heart of every otherwise good deed. There is no more lovable or useful member of society than the unselfish man or woman, and no more disgusting creature than the chronic self-seeker. It is by helping others that we can best succeed in saving ourselves, and accomplishing the purpose for which we were made. This is what Christ meant when He said that "he who loveth his life shall lose it, and he who loseth his life for my sake shall find it." It is, as a rule, the selfish who are afflicted with what the old Latins termed the "tædium vitæ"—the insufferable ennui that makes life not worth living. Those who live for others rarely find life dull or uninteresting, still less unendurable. Our heartiest admiration goes out to the noble men and women, reared in the lap of luxury, having all they require, needing not to work for themselves, but

who, nevertheless, are willing to devote their time and means and energy to the physical and moral betterment of their kind. It is no mere empty compliment to such to style them the "salt of the earth." And well would it be for the world if all others in the same position would but follow these shining examples. No better advice could be given the idle and selfish rich than that contained in the words of Chalmers: "Live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storm of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come into contact with year by year; you will never be forgotten. Your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven."

Unfortunately, selfishness often creeps into our very best deeds, and sweet charity itself is at times but sheer self-seeking. Many there are who give without a particle of genuine love or sympathy. They give with the feeling that they are investing their money in the Bank of Heaven and with the expectation of getting a good, big rate of interest. They are everlastingly thinking of the return: "Cast thy bread upon the waters and it shall return to thee," etc. So long as this remains the sole incentive to human helpfulness, there can be no life or heart in it. It is at best but an emasculated philanthropy. The cold, supercilious dispenser of alms, who throws a coin to the indigent as he would throw a bone

to a dog, seems to forget that helper and helped are both made of the same common clay; that the mendicant is not necessarily, or always, a brazen and thick-skinned sham; that the poor and ignorant are not without feeling, pride and sensitiveness, and that to some of them this enforced beggary is as bitter as gall and wormwood. Small wonder that we hear from time to time of self-respecting poor people brought to the hospitals on the verge of starvation because they shrank from throwing themselves on the miscalled charity of such unfeeling fellow-mortals.

Again, there are many who realize well enough their duty of helping the needy, but they give their help in such a way as not to stint themselves in the least—putting off their deeds of charity till death deprives them of any further opportunity of enjoying earthly goods. Speaking to such, Francis Bacon once said: "Defer not charities till death; for certainly if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own." Fortunate and worthy of all esteem is the rich man of whom we can say what Cicero once said of a certain Posthumus: "In his pursuit of wealth it was plain that he sought, not food for avarice, but an instrument of doing good."

[*August 17, 1910.*]

HONEST THINKING AND DOING

IN Polonius advice to his son we notice that special emphasis is laid on honesty or sincerity in our dealings with self:

> This above all: To thine own self be true;
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Of a piece with this wise counsel is the time-honored adage "Let justice be done, though the heavens should fall," for honesty, fairness and sincerity in arriving at a decision must necessarily precede justice in our dealings with ourselves and others. Needless to say, this absolute, unflinching honesty or openness of mind is by no means a superabundant commodity. It is not always an easy thing to seek and follow the truth whithersoever it leads, whether it be for or against us. On the contrary, it requires fortitude of no common order. For the truth often clashes with self-interest, and at times with lifelong friendships and deeply cherished convictions; and the man who can thoroughly divest himself of bias and prejudice, ever keeping his mind in an open or receptive attitude, like a *tabula rasa* or a wireless telegraph receiver, ready to accept the message of truth whether palatable or unpalatable, from whatsoever quarter it comes, regardless of consequences, is a veritable hero. He is, too, a man whom we can trust absolutely and im-

plicitly, for, as Polonius remarks, if he be true to himself, there is very little danger of his being false to another. Being just to himself, he will naturally be just to everyone else. The two go hand in hand.

This mental poise, or openness of mind, is absolutely essential to the attainment of truth; and those who knowingly fail to cultivate it are not really honest with, or true to, themselves. The full radiance of truth never lights on the blind and prejudiced partisan. The fact of the matter is he doesn't want the truth. If he studies the other side at all, it is only to pick flaws in it, or to find arguments to bolster up his own position. He is not willing to recognize a truth which runs counter to his preconceived views. And since it is only the truths of mathematics, or the exact sciences, that compel our assent, *nolens volens,* it is easy enough for such a one to remain in his error with perfect complacency and self-satisfaction.

Even in matters of conscience we know that men often manage to convince themselves that they are doing no wrong when every impartial onlooker sees clearly that their conduct is utterly at variance with the principles of the moral law. Of course, a change like this in the average, normal man doesn't take place in a single day. It is a gradual process, the result of long-continued mental dishonesty or insincerity with one's self; it is the natural consequence of looking at only one side of a question—the side that favors his interests or his prejudices—to the exclusion of

the other. At first, perhaps, his methods will give rise to some qualms of conscience; but oft-repeated acts of the kind soon blind and harden him, dull and even deaden his moral sense, and eventually land him in the slough which we are wont to style an elastic, or india-rubber, conscience. For, after all, conscience is not an automaton, or a mariner's compass unerringly pointing out the way without our assistance. It is human reason itself pronouncing judgment on the morality of this or that particular concrete act, and, like every other judgment, depends largely on our moral dispositions. From repeated twistings of conscience some people come to have such little regard for truth that they will defend either side of a question with equal ability, and equal insincerity.

We can put no confidence in the man who is mentally dishonest with himself, who tries to convince himself that wrong is right, who is ever on the alert for excuses, endeavoring to patch up his conscience and square his immorality with the moral law. When one has arrived at this pass his case is hopeless, at least until he changes his viewpoint. Far better the man who does wrong occasionally without making any attempt at self-deception, and who is honest enough with himself to admit his error. There is some hope for him.

We cannot insist too often or too strongly on the evils of bias or prejudice, or on the necessity of looking upon mental honesty as a primal factor in the training of youth. Truth is, of course,

the end of education, but without openness of mind—a mind wide open to conviction and free from prejudice—the attainment of truth is impossible. As well try to square the circle or scale the moon.

[*August 24, 1910.*]

SOME QUEER BUSINESS ETHICS

WHAT we are going to say is not intended either for thoroughly honest men or for the consciously and hopelessly dishonest, but rather for the class to which we referred in last Wednesday's article—the men who are mentally dishonest with themselves, but have still some lingering regard for the moral law and some little fear of God, and are, in consequence, ever on the lookout for excuses to salve their conscience. How persons who resort to false weights and short measures, and other tricks of the kind, can succeed in even half convincing themselves that they are doing no great wrong, is too deep a mystery for us to fathom. But many of them do it, nevertheless, by devious ways and processes of reasoning known only to themselves. We are not talking at random. We have often met the type of whom we speak.

It is amazing to find the large number of men who seem to have one code of ethics for their private lives and another, entirely different, in their business dealings. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that they practically dis-

card ethics altogether in commercial life. We could scarcely find a more striking or a more glaring instance of this than the alarming condition which has been repeatedly brought to our notice in the last few years—the wholesale adulteration of foods and drinks. The recent researches of Government experts have given us an idea of the extent to which this criminal practice is carried. So widespread, in fact, was the evil prior to this investigation, that most of us have been, unknown to ourselves, in perpetual danger of death from slow, and sometimes even from quick, poisoning; for many of the adulterants used are nothing short of rank poisons. How any man with a shred of conscience, or with even a shred of common humanity, can resort to such vile methods of money-making, or can even remotely connive at them, passes our comprehension. While eminent physicians the world over are laboring strenuously to conquer disease, or at least to arrest its ravages, these sordid users of adulterants, these human vampires, are doing their level best to thwart the efforts of medical science by adopting the very surest means of sowing the seeds of disease and death. Yet many of them are held in high esteem by their fellow-citizens in private life. Not a few are philanthropists—God save the mark!—wringing vast sums of blood-money out the public by their worse than dishonest wiles, and throwing back a coin or two as a sop; doing pretended charity with one hand, while the other cruelly slaughters thousands of their fellow-men.

Where poisonous ingredients are used, or any other adulterants likely to imperil human life or prove injurious to health, it stands to reason that mere fines, however heavy, are not sufficient penalties. And the same holds true of all decayed or diseased foods. The thing should undoubtedly be made a grave penitentiary offense, for we are not going out of bounds, or indulging in extravagant talk, when we say that such practices are closely akin to slow murder—and a murder all the more unjustifiable, since it is done not in the heat of passion or for the sake of revenge, but coolly and deliberately, merely as a means of increasing the brutal manufacturer's wealth. We have no sympathy with the homicide, but we can at least make some allowance for the manslaughterer worked up to a frenzy at sight of some real or fancied wrong. We can make none for the heartless wretch who coolly sells human life, and thrives and battens on the shattered constitutions of his fellow-men.

True, in the case we speak of—food adulteration—the Government has already taken serious steps to stamp out the evil. But, in spite of its efforts, the law will be violated; and when these violations are discovered, they ought to be visited by a punishment that will make the law-breakers remember for all time, or at least for the rest of their careers. They richly deserve all the punishment they can get—and more—for they are a real and perpetual menace to public health and life.

[*August 31, 1910.*]

THE BURIED TALENT

WHEN we wish to characterize the restless and selfish man eternally striving to reach the top rung of the ladder of fame —by fair means if possible; if not, by foul—we say he is ambitious, thereby implying that ambition is something evil. On the other hand, we say of the habitually lazy or apathetic individual, the man who lacks initiative and energy and interest in life, that he is utterly without ambition, implying in this second instance that ambition is something good. In the more precise languages of antiquity they have different words to express these opposite phases, and it is a pity that, in spite of our bulky lexicons, people feel themselves necessitated to employ the same word now in a good, again in an evil sense. However, provided we understand thoroughly the things for which the term stands, the term itself is a matter of small importance; and it seems to be generally understood that there is a laudable as well as a blamable ambition. The latter is the kind which Wolsey charged Cromwell to fling away, the sin by which "fell the angels." It consists in trying to obtain a place or office for which one is unfitted; or even in endeavoring to secure, by unfair methods, a position for which one may be thoroughly equipped. The other kind is simply the effort to do the greatest possible amount of good with the talents which God has given us; and this kind is not only a right, but likewise a positive duty.

Apropos of this, the reader may call to mind the words of commendation spoken by Christ to the servants who made good use of their five, or their two, talents; and the severe condemnation uttered against the one who hid his talent in a napkin, or buried it underground, instead of putting it out to usury and making it profitable to his master. The gifts of God were not given us for ourselves only, to be used or abused at pleasure, or to be locked up and looked at from time to time, as the miser feasts his eyes on his unproductive hoard. Those who realize the meaning of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men, or our inter-dependence one upon another, will not need to be reminded of this truth. Strange to say, there are some who seem to regard the hiding of their talents as an act of virtue. It is nothing of the kind. Far from it. True, it is an act both of virtue and of common sense to refuse to take to ourselves the credit for whatever gifts we may have, and to avoid seeking our own aggrandizement in their use, but it is certainly a false modesty which makes the receiver withhold due credit from the Giver, and thwart the Almighty's plans. Christ Himself is our warrant for this. "No man," He tells us, "lights a candle and puts it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick that it may give light to all who are in the house. * * * Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven."

Others again, weighing the vast amount of physical and moral evil in the world and the com-

parative little that individual effort can do to mitigate it, allow themselves to drift into the slough of despairing pessimism, taking for their motto: "Cui bono"—What's the use? If all the world reasoned thus, assuredly the world would soon go to perdition. It may be very little that the single individual is able to accomplish, but we know that "every little helps," and many of these little helps thrown together mean a great deal in the long run. Taken separately, our feeble efforts may be but a mere drop in the bucket, but, after all, it is the little drops that eventually fill the bucket, and the ocean, too, for that matter.

In truth the important question is, not whether we have one, or two, or five talents, but the use we are making of what we have. The usefulness of a machine depends on the harmonious working of all its parts, little as well as big. The big ones attract more notice; the little ones may be at times scarcely visible; but let them once cease to perform their functions, and soon the whole machine will stop. And the same holds true of the mechanism of human society. Each and every one of us has his own part to play—his own work to do—and his real social worth is to be gauged, not by the character of his work, but by the manner in which he does it.

[*September 7*, 1910.]

APART FROM THE CROWD

IN this extremely rapid and practical age of ours there is a well-defined tendency, not, of course, among thinkers themselves, but among many of the rank and file, to overlook or underrate the social and individual value of serious thought or sober reflection. From the habit of contrasting theory and practice they sometimes talk and act as thought the two were set in fixed opposition. The word "theory" immediately suggests to them a castle in the air—a something too utterly childish or fanciful for the level-headed man of affairs. Evidently such people forget that there are sensible and well-founded, as well as false and ridiculous, theories, and, furthermore, that practice itself is generally based on theory. We don't mean to say that all thinkers or theorists are great men, but certainly all great men have been thinkers, theorists, "dreamers," if you will; and it is precisely the carrying out of their "dreams" and theories, that made them great. Were it not for the "dreamers" and theorists, we, of the present, would be standing where the race stood thousands of years ago. It was not the busy man of affairs, but the "dreamer" working in his silent cabinet, that taught us how to use electricity, and to dominate the other natural forces which have revolutionized the modern world. All the useful arts, in fact, are based on the findings of these "dreamers" and theorists. When we speak of the French

Revolution the first names that occur to most of us are those of Robespierre, Danton, Marat, etc., but we lose sight of the fact that its real authors were Voltaire, Rousseau and the other radical philosophers of the eighteenth century. In reality it is the thinkers and theorists and "dreamers" who rule the world. They are the power behind the throne. They it is who construct and set in motion the machinery that puts forth the good and the evil things of life. The brethren of Joseph had nothing but contempt for the "dreamer of dreams," as they styled him, but after-events proved that the "dreamer" was the most practical and level-headed of all his father's sons.

To what, it may be asked, does all this lead? The intent is to remind us that serious thought or reflection is at the bottom of all wholesome and profitable action, both social and individual. Without it there can be neither social progress nor individual betterment. In the days when men lived more slowly and deliberately they had more time, and perhaps a more favorable environment, for reflection. In this age of bustle and noise and excitement many haven't the time, or at least won't take the time, for it—and thereby prove themselves their own worst enemies, for those who neglect frequent and serious self-examination will never amount to much, either for themselves or the world at large. In the words of the old prophet of Israel: "With desolation is the earth made desolate because there is none that thinketh in his heart." To know and play

our part in the great drama of human life, we must first learn to know ourselves—our capabilities and our limitations, our weak and our strong points, the mainsprings of our action and the dangers that beset our path—and certainly this knowledge cannot be acquired in the midst of "the madding crowd." Persons of a religious bent, realizing that "the Lord is not in the whirlwind" and counting on the divine promise, "I will lead her into the wilderness, and there speak to her soul," make it a practice to withdraw, at stated times, from the daily routine of human activities, and give themselves up to self-introspection. It is verily a holy and a wholesome practice, good not only for religious people, but likewise for all who take life and its duties seriously. We may not all have the same amount of time to devote to it, or even the same high motives, but without a doubt we would all find ourselves morally and socially bettered by getting apart from the crowd now and then, to take an inventory of our moral stock. It is at such times that the greatest and best thoughts come to us. If there were more reflection and self-examination in the world, to enable us to know ourselves as we really are, there would be far less crime, and fewer misfits in the social fabric. Nothing can be of greater moment for us than to raise our thoughts from time to time above the gross and sordid, the material and the mercenary, to make us realize that we have a rational and spiritual, as well as an animal, nature. As the Emperor Marcus Aurelius says in his "Meditations": "Such

as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind, for the soul is dyed by the thoughts."

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